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MAROON TALES



MAROON TALES

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO STORIES

By
Will J. Cuppy



UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

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TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE

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To
L. A. V. P.

923739

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THE Quarterly Announcements are exceedingly useful. They are good to wrap sandwiches and things in, and to fan with in class; also, they enable the sophomores to tell whether the "snaps" come at convenient periods. Some freshmen read them through to the last footnote—no one else ever does—under the impression that they may take their choice of the courses, or perhaps in the belief that the big white folders are the veritable catalogues of their own accomplishments four years later. Both conceptions are interesting.

But the freshmen need no warning against dangerous mental exertion. Only a few of them—those with abnormally developed foreheads—injure their health in that way. The rest are busy scurrying about the campus for the valuable something or other they think they are going to find. The something or other usually finds them; often on the first day, and

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occasionally when it seems almost too late. You may call it College Spirit, or merely an Idea. It is not in the Announcements.

Phil Jennings, who used to insist upon making observations like these, modestly admitted that he had evolved them out of the adventures of his freshman year. When he threatened to go into details, his friends would groan cheerfully and tell him that the same old things happened to about a thousand others. But that, as Phil would solemnly remark, was precisely the point.

Philip Howard Jennings, Jr., had no special convictions on the significance of the collegiate experience when he came to Chicago. He just hoped he would get a great deal out of the University, as his father had advised. This was rather fortunate, since opinionated freshmen are both unhappy and annoying; they suffer more or less when their notions sicken and die, and they worry the sophomores, who do not learn to smile at all human frailties until farther along in the year.

Philip Howard Jennings, Jr., was eighteen years of age and fairly good-looking, and he was

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usually hungry. He had a good head, which contained a healthy freshman brain.

The boy began by registering for three majors—a major, he learned, was the unit of work, and he would get nine each year. In the dean's office, he conferred with the small freshman next in line about the advisability of taking one or two Sociology courses, while the fellow in front was trying the official soul with original suggestions concerning his schedule. The small freshman, who winked confidentially and bobbed his head at each whispered communication, said he knew which were the "snap" classes. A fellow out under the clock had told him. But Phil asked no questions when he was instructed to take English 1, German 1 and History 1; therefore the dean smiled kindly upon him—about fifty other freshmen were waiting to be ministered to. The dean shook hands quite cordially when he noticed the name at the top of the registration slip, and said he knew Phil Jennings and was glad to meet his son. That made up for the Sociology courses. Many a freshman would have liked to know Dean Jackson and shake hands with him that way.

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When Phil had paid his tuition, he felt that at last he was a part of the University. And he liked the feeling. He liked the great, gray, English Gothic buildings, with their steep, red roofs and their plain, strong outlines, and he liked what he saw through the windows. Most of all, he liked the looks of the fellows all about him. He liked everything and everybody on the campus, with the single exception of Freddy Ball, whom he detested. As Freddy was his roommate, he could not ignore the obtrusive fact that he existed.

A singularly painful dispensation of Providence had condemned Phil and Freddy to unpleasant companionship. It was their misfortune to be cousins, and both were heartily ashamed of it. Their mothers, the most loving of sisters, would have been terribly shocked had they known of the unnatural animosity harbored by their sons. For that reason alone the boys had refrained from damaging each other's faces, and always exchanged Christmas and birthday gifts, accompanied by excessive written expressions of regard, which were meant to be withering.

A little girl with irresistible pigtails and an

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entrancing giggle had started the trouble. This charming young person moved away and was forgotten, but the cousinly warfare continued. Freddy told his friends that he could stand Phil Jennings if he were not such a tin saint on top of his meanness, and Phil thought he might be able to endure Freddy if he were n't such a loud-mouthed little insect. And now Mrs. Jennings and Mrs. Ball had conceived the uncanny plan of making college chums of their sons, explaining with simple foresight that the boys could not possibly become lonesome under such an arrangement. They had taken the trouble to insure the joint occupancy of the very room where the sweet communion was to thrive.

Phil was not the kind that turns the other cheek, but he imagined, as he drank in all the new mysteries of that first morning, that even Freddy might improve in the inspiring surroundings. He felt that he would even be willing to forgive him a few things. After a hasty luncheon at the Commons, where he wondered about the portraits, and at the size of the crowd, he found Freddy in the room in Hitchcock, tacking pictures into the wall, against the combined regulations of the Department of Build-

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ings and Grounds and the Head of the House.

“I ’m certainly glad I came, Fred,” he began, out of the fulness of his heart. “Just see those buildings. And the dean—Dean Jackson—knows father. I remember now that father said——”

“For Heaven’s sake, cut out your father for a minute,” sputtered Freddy, who was quite warm and excited because the wall kept chipping off and because he had nearly swallowed a tack a moment before. “Try to forget that you ’re related to your father. Your father ’s in Kansas and you ’re here. You——”

Freddy stopped suddenly and said “Damn!” very incisively, when the hammer slipped and struck his chubby forefinger. Phil scorned to reply or even to laugh at the accident, but dragged his trunk to the center of the floor and set to work.

It took an hour to decorate the room. When it was finished, John came in with some linen and said, “You all ’s freshmans, ain’t yo’?” and then departed with a knowing smile on his black face. For the decorations were distinctive; a senior could have drawn conclusions even more comprehensive than the janitor’s.

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Freddy had chosen the wall opposite the door with an eye to the possibilities of the broad mantelpiece, which he had embellished with a collection of miscellaneous objects, including a copper chafing-dish, a pottery tobacco-jar, a nickel alarm-clock, a small cloisonné vase, a glaring red poster of the Evil One surrounded by a group of sophisticated young women, and a print of the "Mona Lisa." Above this exhibition he hung a tennis net trimmed with an armful of souvenir dance programs. Along the molding he strung a line of actresses' photographs, clipped from a theatrical magazine. He filled the vacant spaces with cartoons that had been reproduced in the annual of the academy he had attended the year before.

Phil gave the place of honor in the center of his wall to the framed photographs of his father and mother. The high school graduating class, each proud member sternly displaying the self-consciousness characteristic of this pinnacle of educational achievement, occupied an important position directly under Mr. and Mrs. Jennings. The picture of a girls' club and a dozen sepia prints of familiar masterpieces, done in passe-partout by Mrs. Jen-

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nings, completed the impression. Freddy sniffed at the result when he had finished a pleased survey of his own riotous handiwork, and asked his cousin if he did not fear he had overdone the thing. Then he followed John downstairs. He had not improved.

A freshman needs a long time to empty his trunk, if he is an orderly person and wants to find nooks and corners for the disposal of the bushels of perfectly useless things he has brought with him. If not, he pitches the heap of left-overs into his closet—Freddy's closet already contained a heterogeneous mass. Phil had just discovered a top shelf for his superfluous shoes and hats when the postman brought him a letter from his father, with a note from his mother enclosed. He read them both without smiling. There was nothing to smile about.

“It is strange that this offer should have come so soon after you left,” his father's letter concluded. “I forgot to say that Halderman's secretary rushed down to the station to see you, but missed the train. As you had decided some time ago to take up this work if you could get it, I wished to notify you at once.

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Of course, you know I am not thinking of the financial side of it, but I believe it would do you more good than college. You know the opportunities with Halderman are very exceptional. It's a capital beginning for a young man. However, you are to decide for yourself."

His mother's note was quite unlike her ordinarily calm and gentle letters. It concerned Freddy. Freddy's mother had been weeping about her boy ever since he left. She had confessed, hysterically, that he was not what he seemed to be—in fact, he was inclined to be wild and reckless. He smoked cigarettes and said strange things in his sleep. He had come home one night in a very queer condition. His mother feared it was beer.

"Phil, dear," Mrs. Jennings wrote, "do something to stop him before it is too late. We know your influence over him. Be with him as much as possible. Remember, Phil, it will be worth while."

Phil seriously doubted this last assertion, and also the necessity for missionary work. But anyhow, he decided, he would observe Freddy more closely, and if he had been going it too fast, he might do something about it.

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His father's letter had sent unhappy thrills over his freshman being. It was not pleasant to get that kind of advice on his first day at college, even though he knew his father would not insist upon his accepting the offer from Halderman. Phil threw the letters into the drawer of his study-table. Just now he wanted to explore the campus.

He wanted to get the lay of the wide network of cement walks and find out for himself where his classes would be held. He could remember easily enough on which floors of Cobb his courses would come, but he had no idea what the rooms would look like. And he had been told that there were a lot of museums in which you could stroll around for hours without beginning to exhaust their mysteries. Those queer stone benches by the walks had looked interesting, too.

As he was very innocent, he did not know that it is contrary to the rules of sociability for a good-looking freshman to wander alone about the campus on opening day. He was just sauntering slowly away from Hitchcock when three youths, approaching arm in arm, hailed him.

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“You are Jennings, are n’t you?” asked one of them, whom Phil recognized as the fellow that had come into the registration room in the morning, apparently searching for some one. He seemed so sure of his man that he did not wait for Phil’s answer.

“I heard you were here—heard it from Dean Jackson,” he explained; “and I looked up your room number. No, thanks, we can’t go up,” as Phil turned and was about to invite them in. “My name is Taylor, and I want you to meet Wallace and Norton here. Hope we’re not keeping you from an engagement.”

“No, I was not going any place in particular. Glad you came,” Phil answered.

“Certainly, we’re not detaining you,” agreed the one introduced as Wallace, gravely smoothing his red hair. “We’re just holding you up. You can’t get away when you’re surrounded on three sides, like an archipelago, can you?”

“An archipelago is not surrounded on three sides, Red,” said Norton, the stocky, earnest-faced fellow. “That’s an isthmus or a plateau or something.”

“Some day the ‘profs’ are going to get on to

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those fellows," laughed Taylor. "They ought to take a tonic for their minds, if they have any such organs."

"The mind is not an organ, Albert. Is it, Jennings?" appealed the red-headed one.

Phil admitted his ignorance of the point in question. He thought it strange that he should be discussing geographical and physiological problems with three young men that he had never seen until a moment before.

"Can you dine with us at the Rho house this evening, Jennings?" asked Taylor. "I hope you can."

"I 'll drop in at your room and pick you up," Wallace volunteered.

"Thanks, I 'll come, and I 'll find it all right myself," Phil said. "Don't bother to call for me."

Taylor wrote the address of the Rho house on a card, and the three fellows shook hands with Phil and rushed into Snell Hall.

Halfway to Cobb, Phil met Freddy, skipping joyously along toward the room with a stubby-bodied, red-cheeked little fellow, who seemed to be telling a remarkable experience

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of some sort. Freddy was slapping him on the back and screaming appreciation.

“Phil, shake hands with Mr. Blythe. Blythe, this is Jennings, my cousin,” Freddy said as they came up, in the courteous tone he always employed when he felt superior. “You’ve heard me speak of Tommy Blythe that I prepped with? Well, this is Blythe.”

This proud identification of the stubby boy seemed to please him quite as thoroughly as it did Freddy. He chuckled delightedly and admitted that he was indeed the very fellow, but he hoped Ball had not told all there was to tell. He frowned darkly and shook his head at the mere recollection of these awful deeds. Evidently he regarded himself as a dangerous man. But his eyes were so round and blue, and his other features so fair and guileless that Phil was not much affected by his efforts to create the illusion of horrid debauchery, even when he lighted a long, gold-tipped cigarette and puffed at it savagely. The gorgeousness of Tommy’s raiment, too, was merely youthful; a real desperado would have wept at the buckles on the shoes and the cut of the trousers. Phil noticed a small button in the left lapel

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of his coat. Freddy was making signs for him just to look at it.

“Tommy wants us to go over to the Phi Tau house to dinner tonight,” Freddy announced, accenting the Greek letters broadly. “Tommy is a Phi Tau pledge. I accepted for you, of course. I’ll see you at the room at six o’clock.”

“The Rhos—too bad, too bad,” lamented Tommy, when Phil told him of his previous appointment. “Because you’d have had a good time at our house. I’m afraid the Rhos are slow.” It was fortunate for Tommy Blythe that his Phi Tau seniors did not hear this; they might have disciplined him.

“Well, come to lunch tomorrow then, Jennings,” he added affably. “All right, Jennings. See you tomorrow, Jennings.”

Phil looked back over his shoulder and saw the two of them skipping along past Snell and punching each other’s ribs in the joy of their reunion. He was glad Freddy had found a mate; later he was not certain about that. He walked on, stopping occasionally to take in the sweep of the campus and the different views of the buildings. When he reached Cobb, he

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thought he would see how it felt to sit on the attractive stone bench in front of the entrance. Several fellows were lounging on it, chatting familiarly. Phil sat down on the edge, next the walk. No one had told him that he must not do this.

The nearest fellow, who had been watching the freshman, slouched forward.

“I beg a thousand pardons, young man, but I can’t recall your face, though I may have heard the name,” he said. “Let me see. Smith, perhaps?”

The stranger was very insolent, Phil thought, but he gave his last name.

“Oh, it ’s Jennings, is it?” the tall one ejaculated. “He says his name is Jennings,” he announced to the others. “Willy Jennings, I suppose? No? Philip—how careless.”

He turned again and loudly informed the rest of the group that they were mistaken if they imagined the freshman’s name was Willy, because it was Philly—Philly Jennings or Jenny Phillips, as they preferred.

“Did n’t the people in your town ever hear of the ‘C’ Bench, Philly?” the fellow sadly inquired. “No? Well, the people on the ‘C’

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Bench never heard of your town, either, so there you are."

Phil flushed. He could feel a hot streak across the back of his neck. He resented the attack, but he knew it was because he was a freshman, and he thought he should not be "fresh." The other fellows had not laughed. They looked rather bored and they told the bully about it.

"Dry up, you Blacky!" and "Oh, how funny," and "Sass him back, freshman," they called, and then resumed their conversation as if nothing had happened. One of them, who had started to leave, came up and said, "Freshmen are not allowed to sit on this bench, that 's all." And when Phil slid off the seat and started away, the fellow caught up with him.

"Blacky was funny three times today, but it gets tiresome," he said. "The 'C' Bench is for upper-classmen, but there's no sense in Blacky's method of enforcing the rule. By the way, my name 's Harding. I suppose you 're kind of lonesome. Are you?"

"A little bit," Phil admitted. Everybody seemed to know that he was a freshman.

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"I'll tell you, come over to my fraternity house to dinner and get acquainted," Harding suggested, as if that clever idea had just struck him with much force. He seemed disappointed when he learned of the Rho date, but said they might as well stroll over anyway, for "a pipeful" before dinner. The freshman agreed. He began to wonder slightly at the repeated offers of hospitality, and the extreme pleasure everybody seemed to have in his company. You see, he had n't prepped with Freddy, who had belonged to a fraternity at the academy and consequently knew all about college life. But he had heard of a thing called rushing, and he knew he was experiencing it when he had been in the Zeta Mu house about a minute.

The Zeta Mus were obviously on their best behavior. They treated the freshman with such marked deference, and hung so eagerly upon his few words that anybody would have known it. Each man wrung his hand and said, in the same fervent tone of voice, that he was delighted to see him. Four or five fellows who had been tousling one another's hair in the next room, ran upstairs and combed themselves and ran down again. They also were delighted.

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Somebody asked Phil if he had registered yet, and as the freshman seemed to appear interested in that subject and said that he should have to study the next day, the Zeta Mus suddenly began an animated discussion of the latest entrance requirements. The Zeta Mus believed in this system. Shortly before, they had been debating the relative merits of two brands of imported beer with a freshman who lived in Chicago and was very wise.

A pale, bespectacled young man, named Sober Rawlstone, immediately attached himself to Phil, led him into a corner on the pretext of showing him the house, and began to talk earnestly. Phil had been mentally ticketed and assigned to Class B in the Zeta Mu rushing list. Class B always received Rawlstone's instant attention.

"You know, Jennings," he said, "it is a pretty tough proposition to get started in college—started right, I mean. Of course, study and all that is a hardship sometimes, isn't it?"

Rawlstone wished to be perfectly sure that he was addressing a youthful grind before he proceeded. Phil replied that he should not exactly call it a hardship. He feared he might

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hurt the pale fellow's feelings if he answered in another way.

"I remember my own case as a freshman," Rawlstone went on, now certain of his ground. "I came here to study, and I had a mighty hard time doing it at first. It was this fraternity and that fraternity until I had just about enough time left to go to classes. There are many distractions in college life, Jennings, and one has to settle down quickly if one means to go after good grades."

So far, Rawlstone's remarks were true.

"And marks, my boy, are what count," he continued, lowering his voice. "I happened to join this fraternity, and I'll never regret it, because it gave an impetus to my work. I never could have got through in some of the crowds here. Every fraternity has its own specialty, you see, and ours is study, my boy—study. Some of the crowds go in for athletics and some for the speed limit, but I think you must have noticed how interested all our fellows are in their classes. Now, that's all, but if you need any advice, come to me, Jennings—come to me."

Phil thanked Rawlstone, who said, "Not at

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all—not at all,” and he was glad when it was time to leave for the Rho house; happier still when the last of the Zeta Mus had wrung his hand and assured him of the rapture his visit had afforded them.

Phil hoped the Rhos would not make him feel quite so uncomfortable as the Zeta Mus. He was quickly reassured. He almost forgot that he was a freshman before dinner had fairly begun.

Norton and Wallace and Taylor pounced upon him at once, demanding his version of “that archipelago story.” Wallace said that Al and Norry had been accusing him of some fool remark about the thing, and that they had looked it up in the dictionary and therefore felt safe in “joshing” him. Al and Norry held that he had described an archipelago as a large body of fish partly submerged by the Gulf Stream. Whatever it was, Red was certain that Al and Norry had said it. He remembered distinctly that they had said it together in a very loud tone.

The dispute was renewed in the dining room when the deep-throated gong had sounded, and Phil lost every trace of embarrassment in

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trying to answer impartially, which was so impossible that it was amusing. Landon, who seemed to be older than the rest, advised him to withhold judgment in view of the serious nature of the accusations, and threatened them all with contempt of court if they objected to his ruling. Then Landon and Norton told stories, and when the dinner was finished and the fellows had drifted into the big living rooms, the other freshman guests as well as Phil seemed to be enjoying themselves hugely. Nobody seemed in the least impressed by the importance of the occasion.

Norry Norton sat with Phil on the front room window-seat for a time and talked about the generally excellent spirit of the incoming freshmen, and then he pointed out the pictures of the Rhos of former years and of the University athletic teams, which almost covered the walls of the three adjoining rooms. Phil noticed Norry in some of the football pictures, and asked him what position he played. He learned that Norry was only a sub. back and "very rotten," but that Ted Larned, the fellow singing a comic song over by the piano, was left tackle and a holy terror in an open

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field and could defeat an ordinary team alone, almost. Many other Rhos were in the track, baseball and football pictures, and in other groups, which were honor societies.

Ted Larned finished his comic song and announced that he had decided to entertain with his last and greatest effort, which would be worthy of tumultuous applause. It turned out to be a familiar college tune, and Phil and the other freshmen clapped their hands, though no one else did. The next was even better. All the fellows jumped up and crowded around the piano when the one they called Squib struck the opening chords, and they all sang, strong and loud, especially on the chorus. It was a song about Chicago. One of Norry's arms was around Phil's shoulders and his other one was around the shoulders of the fellow on the other side. They sang some more then, and when they stopped, they mauled each other about, and seemed livelier than ever.

There was a Rho bull-terrier, spotless white, but for a red spot on one side, where, Al Taylor said, the Phi Tau bulldog had been foolish enough to leave a tooth-mark. Bill had up and taught the Phi Tau pup what he should

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have known before. Bill permitted himself to be swung by the tail, trundled by the hind legs, and rolled downstairs. The freshmen considered him a wonder, and insisted upon a constant repetition of his limited program of tricks until he finally lost his manners and snapped at the strangely presumptuous little boys, who then turned their attention to the stunts and the buzz of talk.

Phil could not make up his mind just what the Rhos stood for. Rawlstone had said that each crowd specialized in something; but here, surely, were all sorts of fellows. Some seemed serious, and some rather irresponsible, and sometimes they seemed neither or both. Landon, now, must be quite important. Norton and Taylor had been asking him about certain problems of their own, and he had set them right at once. A moment later he had danced a jig with Red Wallace and engaged in a hot-hand competition with Grant and Hawkins, two of the Rho pledges. It was the same with the others. Phil thought these fellows were about the finest he had ever seen.

Stringer, one of the freshmen—the one that had sat beside him in the dean's office—sup-

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plied a great quantity of unrelated information regarding the Rho men. He told Phil, in the confidential stage whisper he had employed in pointing out the possibilities of the senior courses, that he had been "pumping" one of the other freshmen and had learned a lot. That big fellow Landon was called Bugs for short, and the very blond fellow was Pop Walters. The one playing the banjo was in the Dramatic Club, and about everything else there was. The skinny chap leaning against the wall was a wonder in the half-mile and the champion prep. runner of the state; he was only a freshman, but he could tear off a half in no time at all, and he had never been pushed. Morris, the one at the piano, was in the Blackfriars, and he made a "queen" of a girl—could n't tell the difference.

"They're pretty fine fellows, I can tell you, aren't they?" Stringer whispered. "Don't you think it's great?"

"Yes, it is," said Phil, softly. He believed exactly as Stringer did. It *was* great. He thought about it all the way to his room, while Norry was walking home with him. He promised to come again—half a dozen times—and

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he would have made it even more if Norton had insisted.

Phil imagined he had learned a good deal that first day. When he saw that Freddy had not returned to the room, he got out his new writing paper and started to compose some home letters. He would tell his father that he had decided not to accept Halderman's offer. That would be easy enough. He would simply say that he liked college far too well to leave it now, impressing the fact that he was certain of getting a great deal out of it. That assurance might please his father—he had so carefully emphasized the necessity of securing full value at the University.

First, he intended to calm his mother's fears about Freddy. His aunt was just frightened by the silly stuff she had read about college life. Phil was fairly certain that his cousin's dissipations had not reached an alarming stage, despite the frequent hints of his dark deeds.

A noise in the hall disturbed him as he was beginning the letter to his mother. The door opened and Freddy came in, followed by Tommy Blythe. Both stood blinking at the

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light for a moment: Freddy, very pale of face and watery of eye, leaning listlessly against the wall; Tommy bracing his stubby body against a dirty piece of iron piping.

“Hello, fellows,” Phil greeted them.

“Good evening, Jennings. How do you like my cane, eh?” said Tommy Blythe, bringing the section of heavy piping to the floor with a mighty and uncertain thump, perilously near Phil’s toes.

“Good evening, Jennings. How do you like his cane, huh?” echoed Freddy.

“I could brain a man with that,” observed Tommy, with another whack of his new toy that sent him sprawling to the floor.

“He could brain a man, he could brain a man,” repeated Freddy in a very stupid tone, as he slid down beside Tommy. Both were smiling feebly.

“I thought, Freddy,” mumbled Tommy, dwelling upon each word with grotesque gravity—“I really and truly understood that you were more of a tank.”

He seemed dreadfully hurt over it. Phil thought he was going to weep.

“I said, Frederick, you old stiff, you,”

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Tommy went on, with an attempt at a wink in Phil's direction—"I repeat that I was laboring under the delusion that your capacity was larger than seems to be the case."

Freddy did not hear this, because he was asleep. His head was in Tommy's lap. But Tommy did not notice it, and kept turning from side to side in a bewildered effort to find him.

"I hope you will not mind Freddy, Jennings," he said. "I think he has gone to bed without saying good night."

Tommy finally crawled to his feet, allowing Freddy's head to thump against the floor, and sat down in the Morris chair. He solemnly raised his right leg as high as he could, held it aloft with one hand while he unbuckled his shoe and threw it against the wall, and lowered the member to the floor. This accomplished, he repeated the process with the other leg.

"Now, I think I shall retire, if you will pardon the liberty of doing so," he said. "I feel quite sleepy, you know."

Phil might have enjoyed this spectacle at some other time. At this particular time, he did not. He got up and guided Tommy into Freddy's sleeping apartment. He dragged

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Freddy into the same room, took off his coat and trousers—there was a Phi Tau pledge-button in the coat lapel—and piled him into the narrow cot with Tommy, who was already asleep with his yellow head angelically resting on one of Mrs. Ball's drawn-work pillows.

Then he returned to the study-table and tore up the letter he had begun. He stood for a while looking out at the shining arc-lights dotting the campus. For the first time he saw them flicker and turn black.

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II

Phil Jennings was merely an average freshman. He was not overinclined toward the virtuous—which is much the same thing; and he had a fair sense of proportion. He did not blubber about Freddy Ball's first exhibition of wickedness, chiefly because he was disgusted. The next morning, when he had thought it over, he wrote his mother that he would be responsible. He really believed Freddy would not do it again, but in this he cruelly misjudged his cousin. That night Freddy was carried upstairs by a cabman. The following two nights he did not return at all, but arrived later with a patch over one eye and a silly walk. This seemed to indicate his intention to do the thing properly.

Late in the week Phil sat down and took stock of the situation, which he imagined he saw quite clearly. He had given his word that he would shelter and protect a young idiot who happened to be his cousin and who was trying hard to go to the devil. It was to be one of those crazy missionary stunts. He laughed a

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little grimly at the remembrance of Freddy's marked indisposition that morning.

Then there were the fraternities. Since Freddy had jumped at the Phi Tau bid because Tommy Blythe had told him to, it looked as if he should have to give up the Rhos—and that meant Norry Norton and Al Taylor and Red Wallace. Roberts, the Phi Tau junior, had told him that it would seem strange if he went with any other crowd than his cousin's. Evidently Roberts had not noticed that he and Freddy were not exactly chummy.

Phil had seen a dozen fraternities. He had almost been made to feel that he was important. He had met so many fellows that he could not begin to remember their names. Most of them were fine, especially the Rhos. The Zeta Mus had given a dance, at which a girl had related how studious and serious the Zeta Mus were. The same young woman, having consumed large quantities of Phi Tau macaroons and lemon-ice at a similar function given by that organization, had dropped broad hints concerning the surpassing opportunities for a good time within the Phi Tau circle. The girl had a poor memory for faces.

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The Rhos treated him as one of themselves, and he felt he would rather join them than do anything else he knew. He politely declined the bids of Zeta Mu and of several other crowds. He told Roberts, the Phi Tau junior, that he could not possibly decide for two weeks, and that he could not accept any rushing invitations in the meantime. He told Norry Norton the same thing—and that hurt. He thought it was a queer coincidence when he received a letter informing him that Halderman must have his final answer on the very day he had set for his fraternity decision. But he did not know until afterward just how queer it was.

The boy began to feel that something was wrong with his head. He could not figure out just why he was so confused about Freddy and the Phi Taus and the Rhos and the University. He spent one whole morning sitting on a bench in front of the German Building in Jackson Park, gazing into the cloud-banks far out in the lake. He did not go to the first football games, which proved that something *was* wrong.

The next week he stayed in his room as much as he could. He hurried to and from his classes and cut chapel because he did n't want to see

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people. The rushing fell off, and he thought the Rhos were cool because they let him alone, when they were only giving him time. He saw Al Taylor and the bunch swing past Hitchcock on their way to one of the games, and then he was certain they did n't care. And when he heard the Phi Taus coming upstairs, he dropped out of the north window and ran for a Fifty-fifth Street car. The Phi Taus could not understand it; neither could Phil.

After this he tried to concentrate his attention on English 1 and to persuade himself that Freddy was improving. His English themes on college life were such curious mixtures of misinformation and youthful pessimism that the instructor confined his written criticism to a large interrogation-point and a sympathetic inquiry about the condition of his stomach. So the faculty were just like the rest!

Little Stringer slapped him on the back one day and asked him much the same thing, only he said "gizzard" instead of stomach.

"I have n't seen you in the devil of a time," said Stringer. "You see I've gone Zeta Mu. Is n't it strange how fellows will get separated?" And Phil was mightily grateful for

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the little fellow's friendship. That happened the day before he was to see the Phi Taus and the Rhos.

An inspiration came to him next morning in German class—an inspiration that was not strictly according to the freshman code. It is quite correct for freshmen to exchange advice and counsel on certain topics; on the best inter-linear translation of Livy or the various methods of prolonging a recitation until the bell rings. These things must be learned, of course. It is not, however, considered conventional to wrestle with a fellow-freshman's ideas on temperance and cuts, and such things. These are a fellow's own business. So far, Phil had observed the proprieties. In fact, it had not occurred to him that he might gain time by discussing Freddy's status with that young man himself. Phil was nervous that morning, and in a slightly uncharitable state of mind toward his cousin, who had used vividly picturesque language about being awakened at eight o'clock. He shifted about in his seat so much that he annoyed the fellow in the next chair, who was trying to copy down every word of the instructor's remarks concerning the *umlaut*.

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Freddy, arrayed in his fuzzy red dressing-gown, with his feet on the table, his hands back of his head and a cigarette in his mouth, was taking his ease in the Morris chair when Phil entered. Phil removed his coat, put on his fuzzy blue dressing-gown, and sat down on the other side of the table. Both of them looked very young and good.

“Have you been to your classes, Freddy?” asked Phil. He meant to feel around, and he fully intended to be decent about it.

“No, Philly.” Freddy’s tones were sweet and low and his facial expression absolutely seraphic. Mrs. Ball might have beamed her motherly pride, if it had not been for the cigarette.

“You should have gone to History. We had a quiz,” Phil said, in a louder tone. He did not care for Freddy’s angelic fits.

“Did we?” Freddy stretched his legs luxuriously and emitted a yawn.

“Yes, we did,” and Phil’s voice rose; “but I don’t suppose it makes any difference to you. You’ve cut everything for the last week and a half.”

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“Well, what of it?” demanded Freddy, sitting up suddenly. “Whose affair is that?”

“Oh, it ’s not mine,” Phil returned. “It ’s yours partly, and partly it ’s not. I simply wondered how you felt about it, for reasons of my own.”

Freddy arose in wrath. “What do you mean by that, you tin saint?” he exclaimed. “What reasons?”

“Shut up, Fred. Shut up and sit down. I ’ll tell you now what I was leading up to, and then you can go ahead and make a little fool of yourself if you want to.”

Phil had not been leading up to anything, as a matter of fact. He simply was too excited to stop and the words kept coming. Freddy, surprised at first by his quiet cousin’s show of temper, stared in a sort of astonished disbelief at this uncomplimentary broadside, and obediently seated himself.

“I ’ll tell you,” Phil went on. “I ’ll tell you, you little fool. You ’ve set out to be an imitation bad man—you and that crazy little sport of a Blythe. You ’ve been trying to live up to the reputation you think you ’ve got, I suppose. And all the time I ’ve been drooling

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around the campus like a damned sissy, waiting for you to quit it. I thought you might stop, you always get so sick after your baby drunks.”

This high and mighty attitude was not just like Phil Jennings. Freddy continued to stare.

“I might have known you would n’t have the sense to stop.” Phil stood up and walked over to Freddy’s chair. “That shows what a fool I ’ve made of myself. Now go on out and sport around again. I ’m through with it. I ’m through with college. I ’m through with you, you pink-and-white little idiot.”

Freddy arose once more, and his fuzzy red dressing-gown rubbed against Phil’s blue one. “Pink-and-white idiot” was too much!

“Take that back, you—you sneaking preacher,” he roared.

Phil did not take it back. There was but one thing to do. They started at once. Phil’s left arm guarded off the blow that Freddy aimed at his face, and the two grappled. There was n’t any science in it—just outraged youth on both sides. The hand-embroidered dressing-gowns tripped the warriors, and they fell heavily, struggling and scuffling halfway across the room. They rolled and kicked and

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punched and mopped the floor with each other. Once Freddy had Phil on his back and all but vanquished, but he wriggled loose. Then Phil pinned Freddy prone for an instant while he got his breath.

One of Freddy's windmill sweeps of arm caught the tobacco-jar on the mantelpiece, and it crashed to the hearth with the chafing-dish and the "Mona Lisa." Only the tall, leering devil and the sophisticated young women were left, mute spectators of the combat. From across the room, Mr. and Mrs. Jennings and the graduating class looked down serenely.

It was not very edifying. There was blood where Freddy's fist had collided with Phil's nose, and there was a rapidly swelling, bluish protuberance above Freddy's left eye, where the study-table had interfered. Finally, in a flying, whirling rush from Freddy's bedroom, where the battle had swung for a moment, the tail of the fuzzy red dressing-gown caught on a sharp metal corner and held its owner fast, tugging in impotent rage a yard from the prostrate Phil, who had tumbled headlong on the slippery floor. There came a tap at the door.

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The warriors still glared. Roberts, the Phi Tau junior, walked into the room.

It took Phil just two minutes to wash his face and leave. He was quivering all over. He walked away from the campus as fast as he could and out into Washington Park. He must have gone for miles, doubling in his tracks along the graveled paths, for his legs were tired when he looked up and saw the gigantic red brick chimney of the power house rising near. He stopped at the corner drug store on his way back, and bought some stationery and a book of stamps. He circled past Hitchcock and ran up to the fourth floor of Cobb and began to write. When he had finished the letter and put it in his pocket, he did not feel so much relieved as he had supposed he would. This may have been because he had done without luncheon.

He had a disagreeable feeling that he was deserting. But, surely, he reflected, he had good cause to leave the place. What had the big, cold, gray University done for him? Had he received full value? And what had come of his fine ideas about saving Freddy Ball? Whose fault was it? Most of all he tried to

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believe that he had kept faith on that score. He had failed to fit into college and he could n't stay. The boy with the healthy freshman brain gazed at the weird mathematical diagrams on the blackboard and thought these foggy thoughts until the dusk crept in at the windows. It really was foolish of him to miss luncheon.

The lights were beginning to twinkle from every part of the campus when he came out of the door of Cobb. Some one shouted his name. It was Roberts, the Phi Tau.

“What made you dig away so suddenly, Jennings?” he called. “I was n't going to choke you. I was after that lively young relative of yours.”

“Freddy? Did you choke him?”

“I certainly did. Rammed a bunch of official communications down his throat. And now I'm going to tell you about it because I think you ought to hear. You see, I know what the rough house was about.” Roberts seemed to think it was funny. “You need n't look incredulous,” he laughed, “but Freddy has been seeing things. He's been very abject—said some sentimental things about his family. He's

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taken the pledge, has Freddy. Incidentally, Tommy Blythe has followed suit. He's perfectly harmless now, and he does n't care who knows it.

"I was calling in a semi-official capacity this morning when I interrupted the bout," continued Roberts, "I had a little present for Freddy in the shape of some light yellow envelopes. I did n't like to see them sticking in the junior rack, so I lifted them. Down in everything, of course, including Gym. and Public Spouting. It was an awful shock, especially the letter from the dean. Deany dropped a gentle hint about ordering the hearse to stop for Freddy. Said he and Freddy did n't seem to be getting on together. He was scared stiff—Freddy, not the dean. Tommy came up a little later with a duplicate set of correspondence, and then it was mostly remorse on both sides.

"I never attended such a soul-baring clinic. You see, they are afraid their mothers will hear about it. They told me everything, because they think I've been an awful sport myself. There was nothing very terrible—just too many steins, but they believe they have gone the pace."

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“You think this sudden conversion will last, Roberts?” Phil asked doubtfully.

“Last? It’s got to last or it’s good-by to those children, and they know it. You see, Jennings, it works automatically. Those yellow envelopes exercise a restraining influence that’s positively delightful. Better than a million preachments. You can’t stay here without grubbing a little bit. It’s a case of buck up or get out.”

They had stopped at the broad intersection of the walks beside Kent Laboratory.

“And it’s not only the University that disciplines naughty freshmen,” Roberts added. “The Phi Tau fraternity thinks it has something to do with that. We don’t need any floaters of that kind. Oh, don’t worry about Freddy. He’s trapped for a while, and when he gets straight with the ‘U,’ maybe he can go and commit his crimes quietly and circumspectly, without bothering other people. He’ll be able to take care of himself then. And now, Jennings, I want to ask you how you feel on the fraternity question.”

The meaning of Roberts’ news had been soaking into Phil gradually.

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“And now about yourself, Jennings.”

Phil knew what was coming. The Phi Tau extended the bid in a few earnest words. When he had finished, he said:

“Well, is it all right, Jennings?”

Phil had no need to figure out an answer. He knew how he felt. He wished Norry Norton instead of Roberts had asked that question. And then he realized with a start that even that could make no difference—now.

“I can’t accept, Roberts,” he began. “I——”

Over by the Reynolds Club a sharp whistle sounded, high and musical and clear—the call of the Rhos. It was answered by another and then another somewhere in the dark.

“I can’t, Roberts,” he repeated simply. “That ’s all I can tell you. I can’t do it, but I want to thank you for what you ’ve done and—and it was mighty fine of you.”

Roberts was genuinely grieved. He did not repeat his invitation, because there was something in the freshman’s voice that he knew was final. Also, he had heard that whistle, and he was looking straight into the boy’s eyes when it sounded. They shook hands. Phil was standing alone in the shadow when the Rhos bumped

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into him. There were three of them—the same three he had met the first day at college. His freshman heart labored strangely under the letter in his pocket.

“Phil Jennings, where have you been?” Norton demanded.

“Been looking under the sidewalks for you,” said Al Taylor.

“And up the trees,” added Wallace.

Norton and Taylor put their arms in Phil’s and dragged him along with them across the campus.

“You’re going to dinner with us,” sang Red, dancing along in front of him. “And then to the mass meeting. Big doings.”

And now, for some reason, the City Gray seemed different—much different. It was beautiful, Phil thought; more beautiful than he could have believed, and certainly not cold, nor heartless. Even the breeze that blew in his eyes was intimate and friendly. Lights were shining from many windows now; from Cobb and Haskell and Walker and Law, and from the Women’s Quadrangles beyond the stretch of Sleepy Hollow and the sunken tennis courts. It was good to look at these things, and

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it was good to feel the tug of arms locked in his and to hear the soft, low snatches of the Chicago songs the fellows were humming. Phil's throat tightened a little. He did not know why.

He learned a few things about his University during dinner hour, when he sat again at the upper-class table. Landon had been carrying on a spirited discussion of college topics with a fellow named Destyn, who was visiting him. There had been various comparisons, and Destyn was not convinced. So they introduced the question at dinner.

"But, good Lord, Landon, you have n't the traditions," Destyn insisted.

"I know, Destyn, I know all that," returned Landon. "Your argument is beautifully familiar. It 's like greeting an old friend. Even the freshmen are acquainted with it."

"I suppose you have a fine rebuttal cooked up, too," Destyn smiled. "Now crush me with it."

"No, that 's not the way we do it," said Landon. "We have n't any stock rebuttals. We don 't try to impress our antiquity upon people, Destyn. It 's true, we *are* young—the college

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part of us. I suppose that 's what you mean." He spoke slowly and musingly. The others were listening.

"No, Destyn, we have n't, strictly speaking, all of the customs that were handed to you when you entered college. Some of our fathers went to the Old University, but even they did n't leave us much in that line. I think they had a rather hard time getting that sort of poetry out of Chicago as it was then—the city's waking up to lots of things now. And still, my father comes out here on Alumni Day and speaks his piece and gets about a thousand years younger.

"You see, some of us have helped to make what we call our traditions—that 's putting it rather loosely, perhaps. Why, I saw the very stones of Hitchcock piled together only a short time before I came to college—when I was in prep. school. There was n't any Mandel Hall then, or even a Mitchell Tower, or Hutchinson, or a Reynolds Club. There was n't any 'C' Bench. I saw that made, and I saw the Law building go up. I planted some of the ivy you admired today.

"We have n't had time to lay back and

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think of the past—of our past, I mean. We 've been building all the time. There 's something in creating these things, you know—yes, there 's something in making them, Destyn."

One of the other seniors took up the argument. An old grad. spoke rather heavily of the "development of the Chicago personality," and one of the freshmen, who was dying to hear his own voice again, piped in something about the Three-Quarters Club. Destyn was not impressed by all this, of course, because he had not intended to be. But to Phil it was new and strange and fine. Even the football parley that followed seemed less important.

"What are the prospects for tomorrow's game?" the grad. asked, and that started it.

"Really, I hate to say," Red spoke up. "It seems so brutal. We will annihilate the poor things, of course."

Red's view of the case was slightly overdrawn, the others thought. The "poor things" were Chicago's strongest rivals, and it was a matter of general concern that the game had been scheduled for an earlier date than usual. Three or four fellows protested against Red's statement.

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“The Old Man does n’t seem to think so,” remarked Taylor. “I ’m sure he ’d feel more cheerful if he knew the real facts.”

Red fixed a discouraged glance upon Al. “You ’re going to see a different team tomorrow,” he declared. “And after it ’s over, you will have an opportunity to drag in your favorite poetry about Dicky Lee.”

“What ’s in the air?” “What about Dicky Lee?” demanded the Rhos. Everybody wanted to hear the news about the great half-back.

“A new formation with Lee all over the field, that ’s all. The best we ever had, and it ’s going to make history. It ’s a pity we have to spring it tomorrow, but it ’s got to come out. It ’s simply the last word in the Old Man’s football language.”

Only the football squad and a few favored ones knew of the play. Red had coaxed the news from Ted Larned on the solemn understanding that he would “keep his mouth shut for once.” Larned and Norton never told the secrets of the team.

“The yell-fest is going to be in Kent tonight—early. Better move,” Red suggested, and the fellows hurried for their wraps.

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Phil was eager to see this man Lee. It might be his last chance! The fellows were all talking about him as they walked across the campus.

Phil asked Taylor if he thought Lee could really win the game with the new play.

“Dicky Lee and the Old Man together can do about anything,” Taylor told him. “As sure as we ’re walking into Kent, Dicky Lee will win, if what Red says is true. And, Phil, I want you to stick with me after the mass meeting. I want to talk to you. Norry and I were going to see you before dinner, but he had to rush over to meet the team, you know.”

They pushed through the crowd that filled the wide stairway inside the doors of Kent Theater, and found standing room behind the last row of seats, high up against the rear wall of the sloping auditorium. The band was playing—no other music is like it. Fellows were sitting in the middle aisle and leaning against the side walls. One part of the hall was occupied by the girls. Phil could look down over their nodding heads to the stage, where four fellows with megaphones were holding an excited conference. One of them had just rushed in

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with half a dozen others, who had mixed into the mob. The crowd cheered for them just because it wanted to yell.

In less than a minute a confused murmur was running through the hall, and the tone of it was ominous. "Don't you believe it!" "Dicky Lee?" "Yes, Dicky Lee." Phil wondered what Lee had done now.

"What is it, Miles?" Red asked the boy in front of him.

"Lee is hurt, they say. Ankle smashed."

"Did you hear that, Al?" Red asked in a frightened whisper. "Did you hear that? Dicky Lee's ankle 's broken."

Others were asking the same thing in the same scared voice. Kent became almost quiet.

"The team!" shouted one of the cheer-leaders.

Everybody stood up. A big fellow stepped through the stage entrance into the light, and the noise broke. The sharp, staccato battle cry of Chicago rang out again and again. It was repeated with "the team" on the end, fast and strong, while the big fellow and his followers stalked to their seats. The cheer-leaders waved their megaphones wildly. And the crowd was

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watching the entrance. Everybody strained necks and pushed and jumped while they yelled, trying to catch the first glimpse of Dicky Lee. Ten of the regulars and a small group of subs. had come through the dark hole. Maybe Dicky would come last, with the Old Man. There was a second or two of suspense, and the Old Man walked in, at the back of his football children—alone.

“Where is he?” the thousand whispered to themselves and their neighbors.

At that particular instant Dicky Lee the Great was cursing his stars in his room, where he had been carried after that soul-sickening snap in the last minute of practice.

Phil heard Red and Al exchange excited exclamations:

“That means Norry.”

“He ’ll play Norry.”

It was the first thing the crowd thought of. The eyes of the thousand were fixed on Norry Norton. Norry Norton, sub. right half! The cheering continued, but it had to be worked up by the leaders. At a sign from one of these, the noise stopped. A young fellow—Phil recog-

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nized him as an instructor—stepped out and faced the crowd.

“You want to know what has happened, and the boys want me to tell you,” he said. “You may know already. Lee is out of it. He fractured his ankle on the field this evening after the rest of the men had left the field. He can’t play tomorrow, but we ’ll have eleven men on Marshall Field, and we ’ll all be back of them. Just one more word. Norton will play right half. It ’s pretty sudden and it ’s a hard job, but if you know Norton——”

“Who is Norton?” somebody yelled, and the thousand greeted him wildly and stamped their feet on the floor as Norry was pushed into the center of the stage.

“I can ’t play like Dicky Lee,” Norry began. “I can ’t play like the other fellows. But——”

Norry’s voice was husky and his lips twitched. The crowd rose to him. The freshmen, who scarcely knew who he was, almost yelled their heads off, because the others were going mad about him. Norry stood there for a moment while the storm of crashing sound came down to him. He turned slowly then and found his seat. But the thousand had not finished.

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They forgot to save their throats for the game. They forgot everything but the boy sitting there beside the Old Man. They gave Norry Norton his due.

“Norry’s worked three years for that team,” Al Taylor shouted in Phil’s ear. “Three long years he ’s worked like a Turk and sat on the side-lines, and he did n’t expect any glory.”

Phil did n’t hear what the next speaker said. “Three long years he’s worked like a Turk!” Al’s phrase rang in his head. Three long years without any glory! Three long years subbing for Dicky Lee. Three years working for the “U.” It went to his heart like a challenge. It was what he had waited for. And because a freshman is a noise-producing animal, he vented his feelings in a shout that was drowned in the roar of a great, cumulative volume of sound. They were yelling for the Old Man now, and he was looking up at them with a quiet smile on his face—a smile that was as young and happy as Norry’s, for strangely enough, the Old Man was not old at all.

Probably you know the rest of the things Phil saw and heard. He has not forgotten them. He never will.

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When it was over, he clambered down from his high place and joined in the stumbling rush for the doors. He was grasping the shoulders of a little fellow in front, who was very good at worming his way through tiny holes. Some shoving freshmen plumped him fair into the arms of a fellow in the hall, where the mob was breaking. The fellow was laughing and so was Phil. They both said "Wow!" at the impact, and looked up. Phil Jennings and Freddy Ball were laughing in each other's faces. They kept on laughing.

When they had found Al Taylor and Roberts, the Phi Tau, and Tommy Blythe, the repentant, the five of them strolled out of Kent, as far as the crossing of the walks. Al and Phil went on together.

"And now we'll talk it over," Taylor said. "We can't see Norry tonight."

He stopped to drop an envelope into the letter-box by Cobb. Phil's hand went suddenly to his inside pocket. He drew out a forgotten letter, stamped and addressed, and looked at it in the glow of the campus lights. Al held open the slot of the green box, invitingly.

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“No, Al,” said the freshman. “I ’m going to keep it—as a curiosity.”

Sometimes, when freshmen were present, the fellows would let Phil tell about the mass meeting that woke him up. One of the freshmen was always sure to pipe, “Did Norton win the game?” Then everybody would grin, because Norry’s run is part of history.

THE WISDOM OF HAWKINS

RICHARD RUNT HAWKINS was a freshman with freckles all over his face and rather large ears and a shape like his middle name. And Editha Ward was a freshman with a great deal of soft brown hair and trustful eyes to match and a little green hat that was fluffy. They took History 1 with Instructor Eliphalet Emerson, who is mentioned only because he seated them together, according to one of his weird and inscrutable systems. Sometimes they whispered.

About the second week of Autumn Quarter, Runt began to be queer. He gave the first sign by saying a remarkable thing to Pop Walters one night as they sat by the lake in Jackson Park. Said he:

“Pop, I am very, very happy.”

This surely was an extraordinary statement, from an undersized freshman with a funny face. Pop thought Runt must be getting poetic, and he hardly blamed him. For many tiny waves were splashing against the stones at their feet, and round about them was a

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spicy burnt-grass smell and the thrilling tang of the first real football weather. The combination is likely to make you say things you do not altogether mean. So Pop was not excited.

“Are you?” he said, and wondered if Williams, the freshman coach, had let the boy work with the first squad.

“Yes.” Then, “Pop!”

“Go ahead.”

“Pop, do you know much about women?”

“Certainly.”

“But do you know *very* much about 'em?”

“Freshman,” replied Pop, “I have been co-educated for three years now and I've taken two majors in ‘The Family.’ What are you driving at?”

“Nothing,” with a wavering pause; “I just wondered.”

“Tell me about it,” Pop commanded.

What followed would have been simply painful to a confidant less tolerant than Walters, as the freshman may have known. He would not have told so much to any one but Pop, whom he regarded as a sort of fraternal father, and with whom he lived in the relation of modified feudalism peculiar to such alliances. The

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senior was very indulgent, for a feudal lord, but this time he was displeased. He had strict ideas on certain subjects.

Her name, it appeared, was Editha Ward, and her most salient characteristic an indefinable but infinitely potent difference from all others of her sex. Oh, there had been a few in high school! She owned a smile, Runt said, that would soften the heart of a trigonometry professor. And when she walked across the campus with him, she would try to take long steps, "as a girl will," and could n't, and then she would laugh and show the dimple. It was in the left cheek. It looked lonesome. Dicky Lee had sought her favor, but he seemed to be running lame for all his half-back fireworks and his face in the papers all the time. Of course they had been introduced, but bah for conventionality!—they would have met anyway. She had told him a date about some dried-up old king, that had put him through one of Emerson's consultations. She was awfully clever.

"Brainy?" inquired Pop, when Runt stopped for breath.

Runt hotly denied this aspersion and was silent for a few seconds. Then he asked:

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“Pop, have you ever been—been struck all in a heap? That is, in dead earnest?”

“Lots of times,” sighed Walters.

“I wish you would n’t joke about it,” and the freshman’s voice grew earnest. “It ’s not a josh. Surely, some things are—are sacred.” Another pause. “D’ you know, I never thought before that I was capable of a deep and lasting attachment. I——”

“Been reading any light fiction lately?” interrupted Walters.

“Why?”

“How ’s your pulse?” But Pop could feel the boy’s reproachful eyes, and he added:

“Can I help you? Anything wanted?”

“No—o.” Runt shied a pebble into the lake. And it was clear that he was not telling the exact truth. He wanted something very much and had been on the point of divulging it several times, only to subside into inarticulate stammering.

“But Pop!” he abruptly exclaimed. “I do want to ask you not to guy me.”

“All right.”

“Much obliged,” and Pop knew that Runt had stretched out a hand.

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“See that shine of the moon on the water?” breathed the lover. “It looks like—like molten ——” The new-born esthetic tumults in the soul of Runt struggled for an outlet that stubbornly remained closed.

“Like molten molasses?” supplied Walters.

“Ye—es,” doubtfully. “See how it un—undulates.”

“It certainly does undulate very undulatingly,” agreed Pop. “And by the same token we’d better undulate homeward, for I feel much coolness. I’ve a few little odd jobs for you before bedtime.”

Now, Walters and the rest of the Rhos did not, of course, trouble themselves to investigate the affairs of Runt Hawkins and Editha Ward. They observed and speculated upon the sequence of events from the comfortable porches and window-seats of the fraternity house. It was much as if Runt, like the tenor in the opera, entered recurrently and sang of his stirring off-stage deeds, while his industriously attentive friends, after the manner of the chorus, diligently described incidents essential to the dramatic movement. The

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soprano, unlike all others, remained in the wings.

The Rhos knew that something had happened when Runt began to monopolize the table-talk. Quite suddenly the freshman, who had been consistently reserved at dinner, unless the conversation chanced to drift to topics immediately pertaining to a certain tattered football-dummy, or hockey, became strangely loquacious. The day after his first shy conference with Pop, when one of the fellows mentioned segregation, Runt said: "There is n't any darned reason why woman's intellectual development should be different from man's. Woman is man's equal if not his peer." He choked over peer. "She should also be economically dependent—independent—dep——" Everybody howled. The next day at luncheon he spoke of purple shadows and books in running brooks, offered to point out the difference between a fir and a spruce, and wished, rather awkwardly, to know whether any one had noticed how Lake Michigan seems to meet the sky in the middle. The influence of nature study on the Wooded Island was manifest.

The fellows threatened violence at first and

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then became extravagantly polite. They encouraged Runt's slightest advances; there was a certain fascination in guessing the subjects on which he would hold views, and a mighty satisfaction in observing the alacrity with which he jumped to familiar ground, all unwitting of the fiendish delight of his friends. The Rhos wondered what was wrong, but they had the advantage of knowing that the possibilities were limited. It was either a sudden craze for knowledge or it was girl. The first hypothesis being eliminated as illogical, Runt's offense was plain. And the common judgment was confirmed when he admitted his condition to at least a dozen fellows, enjoining strict secrecy each time. Mansfield Garrett Tompkins, freshman, crossed his fingers and promised not to tell a soul.

In one otherwise uneventful week Runt expressed opinions on such a wide variety of subjects, apparently touching upon most of the obscure phases of thought, that Walters almost feared the boy's mind would collapse from the unwonted strain. To his sorrow and disgust, Pop soon learned that these flights into the realm of intellect had not destroyed

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the more sentimental interests. Runt drew him aside and said, among less important things:

“Pop, I think I am a better man.”

To which Pop replied, “H’m,” as if he was not entirely convinced. He said also, “You’re not paying much attention to your class work, are you?”

“Never better.”

“I hear you’ve been dodging football practice.”

“A little,” Runt admitted; “but there are higher and nobler things than athletics. Miss—Miss Ward and I have been working pretty hard on our courses. I don’t think a fellow should be satisfied with just the text-book and the lectures. He should go to the sources. That’s what we’re doing. I’m expecting some A’s.”

Walters was about to cast doubts upon this profound speech, but he only said “H’m” again. While he had a decidedly different view of the case, he could not use the study argument in the face of that kind of testimony! The interview was of small value, for the boy still obviously desired to ask forbidden ques-

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tions. Runt Hawkins was actually embarrassed.

As the freshman grew more confidential, the Rhos, by comparing evidence, arrived at a somewhat amazing conclusion. It was clear that Editha Ward had undertaken the cultivation of Runt's mind; and the fellows said this was a large order. Miss Ward, they found, had begun systematically. She had chosen her culture weapons and the points for their application with very definite ideas of concentration, suburban transportation and entertainment. And according to the location of the civilizing zones, they were popularly recognized as the City Center, the Midway Museum and the Higher Haunt of the Runt Reform Auxiliary. The Higher Haunt was regarded as a distant mental limbo where sojourned the astral forms of many fancies, ranging from Martians to fudge, and from whether girls are truly afraid of spiders to the probable aspect of primeval nothingness. No one pretended to know the more intimate topography of these belts of influence, beyond the facts that the City Center included some unfamiliar down-town places and that the Midway Museum embraced

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various social and educational institutions on the campus.

The Art Institute was among the improvement agencies. Runt reported, in one of his nightly confessions on the foot of Pop's bed, that he liked the lions in front of the building, and the painting of a calf that looked like the real thing, and the "Laocoön," which reminded him of the time that he used to pony through high school Latin with the foxiest interlinear ever. He did not think much of the Old Master women and the beery-looking men that Editha raved over, such as the "Lady With Grouch," and "Man Having Tremens," though he supposed they fitted into the pottery class very nicely.

There was a special classic matinée, for which he crammed with prodigious zeal, only to find, after the performance and after making some well-memorized remarks concerning the three unities and the development of the catastrophe, that he had studied the wrong play. And there were some curio shops, from which he lugged home many strange and expensive objects, which he raffled at a cent a chance; and some chamber music, which he asserted, in

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a spasm of candor, would disgrace any respectable Glee Club.

The serious effects of these uplifting forces were negligible. And the fellows were troubled, not wholly because they thought Runt was going to flunk, but because it is a very bad thing for a freshman to be in love; it is presumptuous, and against the wishes of the upperclassmen. So they grieved as over a scientific principle suddenly gone wrong; as if parallel lines had crossed in the night or the cosecant had done something flippant. Pop scowled, as was proper in one who felt responsible for the correct bringing up of a freshman. It was getting on his nerves. He spent some time in wondering what to do.

The Rhos were oppressed by the feeling that their rights in the matter were scant. It is difficult to tell a friend that his dearest emotions displease you. The freshmen almost wept because Runt would not play with them—he had even given up his habit of coaxing the bull-dog to jump for his tail simultaneously in two directions. The sophomores oozed contemptuous smiles. The juniors were indignant, and said

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so. Even the seniors allowed themselves to become interested.

For the first fortnight, all were agreed upon the extremity into which the freshman's un-wisdom had plunged the formerly well-regulated Rho family. Then some of the fellows met Miss Ward at a Reynolds Club informal and promptly organized an opposition because she was cunning. The crowd split. Bugs Landon, who remained neutral, called the factions the Pro-Runtites and the Anti-Runtites, and thought it significant that the Antis were those who had not made the acquaintance of Editha. The Pros, recanting unconditionally, advanced the proposition that man, being a free moral agent, may do as he wishes at any time, regardless of authority, a body of doctrine which the Antis flatly controverted at every point.

"Runt won't do anything at all any more. He's all to the bad," wailed Tompkins.

"I'd go jump in the lake if it affected me that way. It's pathetic. Makes me sick," eloquently observed Squib Morris of the sophomore class.

Said Red Wallace: "This original research business is all bosh. I don't believe he has a

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smell of credit coming to him. She probably likes to have him run errands. And besides, there 's Dicky Lee." Red had not heard that Dicky Lee had dropped out after vain attempts to secure half a dozen dances at a Rosalie party.

"Wait a while," Ted Larned advised.

"Humph!" ejaculated a graduate, and those present thoroughly agreed with him, irrespective of battle lines. For the grad. had a big reputation as a sage, based largely upon the frequent use of this monosyllable, which was susceptible of innumerable inflections and had been known to swing elections. As usual, it seemed favorable to both sides. The talk did not amount to much.

Blithesomely unaware of the wordy judgments and increasing concern inspired by their every appearance on the campus, Runt and Editha continued to discuss tinted shadows. They went to lectures on queer subjects at Cobb and Kent and to dances at Green and at the Reynolds Club; and to receptions, where Runt was fondled by faculty women who thought him refreshing.

And they attended the games, which suited

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Runt better. It was great, he thought, to climb up into the bleachers with her, with that wild football tingle shooting and trembling through him and the band playing for dear life and the pennants leaping before him in great, vivid masses of color. Yes, it made up for not being down there with the fellows in the tightly packed rooters' section—down there as a part, a living part of that huge, joyous, shouting monster that waves all its arms at once and shrieks and roars from its hundreds of hoarse throats, and quivers and bends and sways with the ball, and catches its breath in great sobs, and sometimes jumps to its hundreds of feet. Of course, it made up for that. So, you see, something had to be done.

“That young Mr. Hawkins of yours should really be restrained,” said Laura Fielding to Walters, as she momentarily stopped managing a circus in Lexington. “He’s sitting up there in front with Editha Ward, and we wanted her to serve frappé and pull the curtain. Editha’s a dear little thing, but she’s getting too independent for any use. . I wish you would discourage the young man.”

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“I ’m afraid I can’t. It ’s got beyond me,” said Pop. “Freshmen are not what they used to be.”

“Then if you feel you really can’t,” murmured Miss Fielding, “I shall have to ask Ted Larned.”

“On reconsideration, I ’ll do it myself,” Pop assured her. “I ’ll break up the combination. But it may take a few days.”

Miss Fielding darted away, leaving the senior conscious of having bound himself to a rather difficult task. An usher seated him near Runt and Editha, where he could observe. Runt was evidently having a fine time. He applauded the first stunts rapturously and nearly fell off his seat in his enjoyment of Mademoiselle Hortense, Queen of the Roped Arena, otherwise Margaret Ferriss, who performed amazing feats of daring upon the docile back of a stationary leather gymnasium “horse,” which she mounted by means of a ladder. Mademoiselle Hortense stood erect and fearless on the steed, waving her arms and bowing to the excited clapping of hands, while Pauline Winters, the ringmaster, fiercely cracked a small whip in time with the nerve-

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attacking piano accompaniment. Bertha Matson did black magic at a table that was veiled with a tinsel scarf and covered with "properties." She caused a glass of brownish water to turn pure white by mumbling a heathen formula and pouring something into the glass, and she did the Indian basket trick with a cheerful and utter disregard of illusion, all of which aroused deafening approval. Another girl lifted thousand-pound weights with comparative ease, and threw one of them at Runt, who dodged. The next girl complimented him with a bouquet, which rebounded on its rubber string from his outstretched hands to the stage. Runt looked foolish, and Pop noticed that he seemed to regard each ensuing number with increasing alarm. Neither the minstrel sketch, with its jokes about the torn-up campus, and the faculty, nor Miss Fielding's patter song could restore his poise after the foolish weight and the elusive flowers.

Everybody was laughing and nobody could understand anything that was said and it was delightful. But Runt did not applaud, for he thought the patter song referred very pointedly to him. And after the show, one of the girls in

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the palmistry booth, who said her name was Madame Ino, insisted upon reading his hand. She told him, after consulting a chart that looked suspiciously like a map of Germany, that he would some day cross the water with a person whose initials were "E. W." He fled from Madame Ino without paying his quarter. He did not enjoy the rest of the entertainment. But he was no more disturbed than Pop, for Miss Fielding reminded the senior of his promise as she sold him sticky candy for the fourth time.

It so happened that Pop Walters was not called upon to make the first move. Runt himself did it. The pottery class was responsible. He was the only fellow in the course and he could n't do the beastly stuff, although Editha helped him a great deal; and he knew the girls giggled behind his back. The girls seemed to think he was quite a joke. One day a visitor who had a large funny-bone, laughed outright, whereupon Runt marched from the class.

For he had caught a cold, critical glimpse of himself in that moment and he was ashamed of what he saw. He slammed the door behind him—and blushed. He blushed furiously. He felt the burn of it shoot up into his ears and

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scorch into each separate freckle and sweep along his shoulders and sides, clear down his legs and to the ground. It was a very vigorous and healthy blush, and it did a thorough job. It started a whole procession of thoughts. Runt had it out with himself then, for he thought he might as well decide a number of things while he was about it. When he had wrestled with and thrown his pride, he went straight to Pop.

“Pop!” he said.

“Well?”

“I ’m a fool.”

“At last!”

“I ’m a chump.”

“Correct!”

“I ’m ignorant.”

“Check!”

“I don’t know a blooming thing.”

“What,” inquired Pop, “seems to be troubling you?”

“You know.”

“Miss Editha Ward?”

“Yes,” gloomily.

Pop laughed, for he believed he knew what was wrong. Runt went on:

“I ’m too ignorant to live. If *she* knew how

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I've been faking and fooling her and making her believe I'm some account when I don't know as much in a minute—in a month——”

“Why don't you study a little more?” asked Pop, remembering the City Center and the Higher Haunt.

“I do, but I can't keep up with her. I've worked all I know to the limit. She seems to know everything.”

“Oh! You mean her conversation!”

“Yes.”

“Then you still admire her superior intellect, do you?”

“Yes—well—that's what I wanted to talk to you about. Sometimes I wish——”

“That she were less wise and more human?”

Runt played with his pledge-button and was gallant enough to let the question go unanswered.

“She's awfully bright,” he lamented. “I wish I was. I hate to be a regular mutt. I simply can't tell her *anything*.”

Here was Pop's opportunity, thrust upon him, staring him in the face. He should be forgiven for the use made of it. He planned a mean trick on a defenseless freshman, but he

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thought the end was good and holy. Pop saw his duty and remembered his promise, and he thought he would do a high and noble thing in a rather underhand way. This is hard to do.

“Runt,” he asked, “did you ever have a fad?”

“Yes, I used to know a good deal about crystal gazing.”

“Fine!”

“No, it’s not.” Runt shook his head mournfully. “You’re going to tell me to teach her all about it and she’ll think me a wonder. I tried it. She said it was silly and changed the subject. I can’t make a hit with that. I even went up into the library and tried to find something interesting in the index, but I only got part way through the a’s. I thought of trying ‘Ants: Their Habits and Customs,’ but it made me feel crawly.”

Pop broached his plan. He said:

“My idea is not so much to make a hit with her as to tire her out. Now you scare up some hobby and harp on it for a week or so and she’ll see the point, all right. She’ll soon realize how weary she has been making you. Don’t let her get a word in edgeways. See?”

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This was an incomplete disclosure of the scheme.

“I don’t know whether I do or not.” Runt looked dubious. “I could n’t talk five minutes to save my skin.”

“Yes, you can. You’ve *got* to.”

“All right. What do you think I’d better lecture about?”

Pop hastily ran over a list of subjects. “The Indian Tribes of North America,” “Our Criminal Courts,” “Oliver Cromwell” and some others were rejected as “fierce.” “Egypt: Its Wonders and Its Charm,” sounded better. Runt said he had once been in Cairo.

“Do you remember much of it—the Great Pyramid, for instance?” Pop inquired.

“Not so very much.” Runt tried, with many wrinklings of brow, to call up dead images. “Seems as if it was either red or yellow, or maybe that was the hotel we stayed at.”

“I can’t see how you could forget it,” exclaimed Pop. “It is so decidedly violet. Surely you recall the peculiar pinkish and greenish effects by moonlight!”

“I’m afraid I don’t, but I’ll remember.” Pop seemed pleased. “You are now an

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authority on mummies, hieroglyphics and souvenirs," he said. "You are interested in the Nile—crazy about Ptolemy the 'Steenth."

"Do you think this is just right? Isn't it a good deal like—like cheating?" faltered Runt.

"Do you wish to go through life with these required lectures hounding you day and night?" Pop inquired severely. "Do you desire to grow old dissecting the whole horrible catalogue of 'isms' and 'ologies'? Would you like to become a senseless, spineless abstraction, and finally die, friendless and alone, a mere used-up scrap of gray matter? Would you?"

"No—o," Runt admitted, involuntarily recoiling from this vague but grewsome picture. "No, I would n't."

"Very well. Then I 'll fix you up. I 'll write you an essay on Egypt—I can use it later in English. I 'll bring it to you tonight and you can get busy. Memorize it. Write it on your cuff. Do anything with it, only get it straight."

"All right." And Runt had swallowed the bait.

Pop went to the library, but merely because libraries have excellent tables to write on. He composed a paper that would have secured his enrolment on the probation list if shown to a

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member of the faculty; if examined by an alienist, it might have resulted in the author's retention in a sanitarium. He did not have to refer to books, for he felt the glow of creative genius burning strong within him. He constructed a new science of Egyptology—one that sprang from the clear pools of imagination and airily overleaped the restrictions of history. He toyed familiarly with demigods and dynasties, and invented royal persons whose names bristled with consonants. He jested with heaven-bands and sun-discs and cuneiform, and when he felt like it he mentioned the Signs of the Zodiac and a few heroes of the Trojan war. He added some stilted notes, and gave a last artistic touch by illustrating with original seals and symbols and strange birds and beasts that never were, and for anatomical reasons, never were likely to be.

“If the learned Miss Ward ever speaks to him after this, I am a bum oracle,” he told himself as he handed the thing to Runt the next afternoon. “I rather think I have fixed him.” From which it may be gathered that Pop imagined that clever freshman girls do not like brainless freshman boys.

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Over Pop's curious invention Runt spent a grateful half-hour. He was enthusiastic.

"I think that 's great stuff," he said. "I seem to recall a good deal of it now from that trip. I like it. I tell you, I 've got a regular life-size crush on it. I never knew before that the Pharaoh who caused the plague of grasshoppers was an uncle of Cleopatra. And I 'm glad to find out that the ancient Egyptians originally intended the pyramids for smoke-houses."

"Don't get excited over it," advised Pop, with a twinge of conscience. He felt like telling the whole thing.

"It 's mighty interesting, though," Runt insisted. "I 'm going to call on her at Green tonight and I almost think I 'd rather talk this stuff for what it 's worth and give up the scheme."

"Give up nothing," returned Pop, hotly. "Do you want to spend the rest of your life gabbling about spooks?"

"No, perhaps you 're right," Runt agreed. "But I 'm going to study it on the sly. I like those scarabs that they used to frighten the

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Arabs with." And he plunged again into the absorbing theme.

"Remember to take some notes on your cuff," Pop reminded him as he started for Green.

"No, I have it all salted in my head," laughed Runt; "I 've got it down pat."

Pop's sympathies rose again. He smothered them. But as he studied his modern philosophers, the fortunes of the freshman intruded constantly. The spiritual possessions of great minds grew tiresome. He found himself sneering at what the book called the "epistemological" problem, at innate truths, universal substance and the nature of objectivity—the whole batch of them. He wondered if Editha Ward could tell him just what was meant by the transcendental unity of the apperception, or if she had ever taken Kant. He cast the philosophers aside and meditated drowsily upon his recent labors. From disapproving introspection, he passed to tranquil complacency and thence to a state of sleepy self-beatification. The job was rather heartless, perhaps—but he was right. The smoke from a good brier ascended and floated in fragile halos to the ceiling. The saint began to plan Runt's sophomore year.

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But there is no sense in counting your freshmen before they are thoroughly incubated—none whatever. For freshmen are unique. Their ways are devious and inexplicable. Some think them overgrown children; some, men not quite matured. In either case, they seem always to be, by the act of some special guardianship, lifted for a time quite outside and above the known natural forces. It has not been discovered whether this species occurred on the prehistoric cliffs. But probably it did, and so it may be regarded as certain that the primitive “freshy” disturbed the feelings of his betters most cruelly, and that when the professors sent him tons of flunk notices on boulders, he soon learned to toss them aside with the same magnificent nonchalance that accompanies the less muscular act at the present time. Pop had not allowed for this. He was still blowing concentric halos when Runt arrived.

“Well?” from the saint.

“Well, yourself.”

“Go ahead.”

Runt looked solemn. “I don’t see how you ever got me to do that half-witted Egyptian princess thing,” he flashed at Pop, who tried to

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appear bewildered and hurt. "I might have known better."

"Did it work?"

"It was just common deceit," Runt declared; "mean, low deceit."

"Say, fresh——"

"I mean my pretending that I knew it all."

"Oh!"

"I never deceived her and I never will—that is, I never did very much," and, bashfully, "I don't believe I could if I tried."

Pop assumed the expression of an instructor conducting an oral. "Begin at the beginning and tell me the whole business," he ordered. "I suppose the maid told you to sit in the parlor, and after waiting the customary forty-seven hours, Miss Ward came down. Now, then!"

"She said, 'Why, how do you do, *Mister* Hawkins.'" "

"You need n't be so specific. Jump to Egypt."

Runt accomplished the leap with expedition. "I began to reel off Egypt, and——"

"And——"

"She seemed to think I was loony or some-

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thing, and asked me whatever was wrong with me. I kept right on with the heaven-bands and things and I got mixed up quite a lot and——”

“Did you spring the violet pyramid?”

“And she said she spent the winter in Egypt once, too, and then I got rattled for sure and—and I stopped.”

“You what?”

“Stopped—confessed. I told her the truth—the whole business.”

Pop braced himself and wondered if the boy had taken it very hard. He did n't seem at all pale and haggard.

“You told her you were shamming?”

“Told her the whole thing.”

“About me?”

“You? Oh, you mean about your supplying the hobby! Of course not.”

“What did she say?”

“A lot. I'll tell you some of it. She is n't brainy!” Runt's voice rang with a note of vast relief. “Not a bit brainy! And she said she did n't blame me at all for the—the trick. She's been reading up a lot of rot because she thought I liked that kind of thing. I did juggle some big words that—that first day. I was trying to

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show off. We both feel awfully glad, now that we know how it was.”

So that was the reward Pop got for his pains. The fine fabric of his beautiful plot came tumbling down upon him.

Runt kept on talking. He was wound up. “You see, it was bound to come out right,” he smiled. “Love, I suppose, overcomes all ob——”

“H’m!”

Pop was holding himself in. He tried to console himself with the thought that Runt had not discovered the true origin of the Egyptian thesis. That, he felt, would be almost humiliating.

“Pop!”

“Yes,” savagely.

“She skates—plays ice-hockey and all that. And tomorrow she’s going to meet me under the clock in Cobb.”

Pop grumbled something unintelligible.

“And she gave me some candy that she made herself.”

“They all do,” growled Pop.

“It was brown and white.”

A groan. “It all is.”

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“And Pop!”

Walters moaned feebly.

“I ’ve got a good one on her.”

“Tell it. Tell it quick!”

“One of the older girls—Miss Fielding—came in about ten-thirty and hinted that it was pretty late for small girls to be up. She asked what time it was.”

“That is a good one—on *her*.”

“And when I said good night to—to Miss Ward, she——”

“Out with it.”

“She—she called me——”

“Good Lord!”

“Called me—Richard,” Runt finished softly.

“And you,” mimicked Pop, “you called her—Editha?”

“Yes, and——”

“Is there more?”

“Why, yes. I want to thank you for all the trouble you took. If it had n’t been for your help, I ’m afraid it would n’t have lasted much longer. And I ’m certainly glad you picked out Egypt, because we got to wondering what color the Great Pyramid really is, and I told her we ’d

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go over there some time and take a good look at it and find out for ourselves.”

“You *told* her, did you? Did your traveling plans meet with her approval?”

Runt seemed surprised. His freckles melted together in a beautiful orange tint, and he folded his arms impressively.

“I simply said we should go and see,” he replied. “I did n’t ask her.”

“Indeed!”

But Pop’s jeering comment fell flat of its own impotence. For Runt’s voice was strong and unshaken, and it stayed in the lower register, without breaking. And there was an undeniable authority in his eye, a confident, assertive glow that never wavered. In silence, Pop beheld the miracle. He knew what it was. He had seen it before. And he knew that he was bidding farewell to the meek little boy who used to race after stamps and build smudgy fires in the grate without a word of protest or an evil thought. Always in the future this different Richard Hawkins would murmur against his brothers instead of fearing them. And he would never open his freshman heart again,

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for he would be sufficient unto himself. It is certain to come.

“You ’d better go and get your history lesson now,” advised Pop, and he was prepared for the answer.

“Don’t you worry about me any more,” said Runt. “We ’re through with the source-chasing game, and we ’re going to study our courses together now—all three of ’em. I ’m going to take up the pottery again because I need the credit. D’ you know, I think it was rather kiddish in me to stop it.”

“Yes, it was,” said Pop. “It was almost boyish.”

“Say, she did n’t get on to anything queer in those jumbled-up dates and things,” continued Runt. “That ’s pretty good, too, is n’t it?”

Pop wished, naturally, to keep his self-respect. He thought he might, if he lied enough. So he asked, as if deeply puzzled:

“Jumbled dates? What jumbled dates?”

“I mean I mixed ’em all up when I got rattled—before I confessed. Of course, I don’t suppose there was anything wrong with the paper you gave me, because you got it all out

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of the books in the library. Here it is. I don't need it any more."

He pulled "Egypt: Its Wonders and Its Charm" from his pocket and gave it to its author. Also, he smiled; a soul-searching, twisted, utterly incomprehensible smile that might have been pure innocence or cold, calculating wickedness.

"And I want to thank you again for your help," he added. "Everything worked out just as you predicted—almost. Good night."

He turned and stalked grandly from the room toward the stairs, shoulders squared proudly, the very tips of his expansive ears radiating the strange, new dignity that enveloped him. He stopped at the first landing and looked back, and as he looked he smiled again, then proceeded upward into the shadows.

Pop arose wearily and walked across to a statuette on the mantelpiece. He requested the plaster gentleman please to kick him. But that person, who happened to be seated very comfortably upon a horse, kept his feet in the stirrups and his head cocked sidewise, listening, no doubt, to the firm, determined tread of the man in the room above.



SOME ODES AND SOME EPISODES

WEBSTER had finished a normal college and five Summer Quarters without losing either his dignity or his given name, which was Publius Virgilius. He brought both to the Rho fraternity house, where they lasted almost a day.

He heard himself christened while he was rubbing his spectacles near a door that should have been closed. "Do you mean to tell me his own parents called him that?" came a boy's voice. "Shades of Dido, what an outrage! We'll call him plain Horace or Cicero or some other old idiot. Give me a dime, Tubby. Heads, it's Horace. Heads it is." There followed more comments of the sort boys sometimes make on hot and foolish afternoons. The comments were not kind. Horace sneaked away, blinking rapidly.

Webster supposed, erroneously, that he had "seen beneath the surface," a consummation he had held hopefully in mind when he accepted Landon's invitation to live at the Rho house for the summer. The chance glimpse fully con-

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firmed his previous belief that the "regular" students, especially the fraternity men, were light-hearted, irreverent, cheerfully careless young persons with somewhat heathenish views of life. But the foolish remarks went deep into him. They went so deep that he could not get rid of them. He rubbed his spectacles many times, and with a clearer vision, concluded that the summer was not entirely ruined. He discussed the matter at some length with Miss Sarah Pence as they sat on a bench on the Midway.

"It is just what I have wanted for years," he said. "Only a few of the members of the club are in residence, and I am sure they will not mind my presence among them. In fact, they do not seem to mind much of anything. I really think I shall grow young again just living with them."

"Young?" Miss Pence laughed gayly and pushed back her gray curls with the swift, girlish movement that had often impressed Webster as strikingly typical of her continually alert mind. In any other woman of her years it might have seemed ridiculous. "Young? Why, you are only thirty, are you not?"

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“Thirty-one, and I suppose I am taken for forty.”

“No,” said Miss Pence, “I think you look just thirty, and possibly thirty-five when you overwork, as you did last year. I am forty-eight and I should probably look ninety if I were a ‘grind,’ as the students say. When I become fatigued I simply give up part of the lectures and buy some extract of beef. It is very invigorating.”

Webster and Miss Pence seldom spoke of things so intimate and personal as their ages. They had considered many subjects on the Midway bench; but chiefly History and Sociology and open lectures, which may be almost anything. As they found, too, that the problems of school administration in Nebraska and Ohio presented many points of similarity, the ancient Goths and the percentage of persons of a certain age and condition maimed and mangled by dangerous machinery had been neglected at times for the more pressing questions of teachers' salaries and the lack of adequately equipped scientific laboratories in secondary institutions. There had been no time for the discussion of undergraduate University interests.

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It takes exceptional persons to enjoy that sort of thing for three summers. And Sarah Pence was, as Professor Whitler of the Sociology department observed, "a remarkable little woman." She showed it in her first course. Setting her soft gray eyes to a scientific task, she could pick a "fact" from a page of statistics with all the precision and despatch of a skilled biologist over a frog; and she could deliver her views to the class in arguments as clear-cut as the cameo she invariably wore on the collar of her severely plain black gown. "She is a product of the new education," said the professor, "and quite an extraordinarily brilliant one."

Professor Whitler's estimate of Webster was confined to the mental note that he was not so skilful as Miss Pence in constructive thinking, but fully as competent in his grasp of the human wants and in the grouping of details, and that he was a pleasant enough fellow to talk to. Besides these distinctions, Webster was tall and bony and had light blue eyes that never looked any darker at any particular time and light brown hair that never combed well and a pale complexion. A romantic and widely read

SOME ODES AND SOME EPISODES

young woman from Milwaukee said he probably had a secret sorrow.

Miss Pence usually guided the conversations on the Midway bench, but this evening Webster was assuming this privilege. He had deliberately shifted to personal ground because he wished to know Miss Pence's opinion, and he did not intend to be stopped by the extract of beef hint.

"At any rate, I feel as old as a biblical patriarch and I know that I am getting—well, rusty." He decided to strike in at once. "I have spent some time in thinking it over, and I have found a remedy."

"Yes?" Miss Pence's answer expressed the mildest of surprise.

"I have made up my mind," he explained, "to take a kind of vacation this summer. Strange as it may sound, I intend to have my fling at last, if only in a harmless sort of way; I suppose I'm not equal to anything really dangerous. I shall, as it were, undertake a systematic piece of research in 'studentology.' I have an excellent opportunity, now that I am living with a colony of youngsters."

Miss Pence smiled.

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“I believe I shall try it, too. You know I am in Foster this summer. We can compare notes. Have you specific desires, Mr. Webster?”

“Not unless you call downright irresponsibility a specific quantity. For I suspect that is about what I am after. I should ask nothing better than to be one of those young pagans who lie on the grass in front of Cobb and kick up their heels while we are inside digging for our forty dollars' worth of education. I should like to transform myself into one of those Rho boys or one of their happy-go-lucky classmates, and sprawl out alongside of them and stretch myself and not care whether it was morning or night. They are all more or less alike, I fancy. That's just it. I *fancy!* I want to *know!* I intend to try their style of existence for a while.

“And not only that, Miss Pence,” he rushed on; “I must confess that I feel the need of friends—young friends. Why, I doubt if I have enough of them to bury me. That is where I feel a weakness in Professor Whitler's list of essentials. I sometimes think that sociability should come first—that I could do without food and clothes if I only had some one to call me names.

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“Do you know, I ’m sick of myself—deathly sick of what I am doing.” Webster faced Miss Pence’s politely astonished gaze without noting the puzzled question in the gray eyes. His thin face flushed as he went on passionately: “I ’m sick of teaching in a third-rate high school in a third-rate town and lecturing on special occasions at a third-rate opera-house on things I ’ve read were true, and then coming here every so often to swallow some more learning so that I can hold my job. I don’t feel any ground under me. I slid into teaching, and now I ’m sliding through college at the rate of a Quarter a year and a couple of correspondence majors. It strikes me as absurd. Heaven only knows what I ever intended to make of myself. I think it is time to seek new fields. That ’s why I want to break loose.”

Miss Pence’s judgment of the timeliness and good taste of Webster’s unexpected outburst had not in the least interfered with her swift, impersonal analysis of it. Amusement and then surprise had given place to a rapid, emotionless survey of the new “facts” placed before her. True to her habit of mind, she sorted and tagged these and comprehended them all in her reply:

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which, if written on official theme paper, might have passed as one of her characteristic lecture reviews, with concise summary and suggestions for further elaboration appended.

“Your complaint and your cure are somewhat involved,” she said. “You feel that you are ‘rusty,’ that you lack agreeable companions and that your present environment and prospects are monotonous and unworthy. You purpose to change these conditions by assuming or acquiring an attitude of recklessness—a quality you admire in certain young men. Admitting the accuracy of your diagnosis, are you satisfied that you thoroughly understand the implications of the remedy, that you have chosen the right models, that you would enjoy such a change, and that it would be possible; and if so, that the result would be dignified, would provide you with a more pleasant means of livelihood and would not interfere with the three o’clock seminar?”

The whole thing was so like the recitations she clicked off in class, and the last rather trivial consideration was such a delicate and unconscious concession to her horror of cutting—a mortal sin—that Webster laughed. And

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Miss Pence, because she was not quite certain whether Webster was so serious as he seemed, laughed, too. Then they both felt better.

“There!” Webster exclaimed. “My new personality already begins to assert itself. I am becoming frivolous.”

“I fear so,” Miss Pence assented. “But do you not think you do yourself an injustice? Do you believe others consider you so—so archaic as you imagine?” It was Miss Pence’s rule never to dismiss an argument without arriving at a conclusion. She regarded the rule as very helpful. She thought it “so educating,” a description she was accustomed to apply broadly to many things.

“Yes, those boys at the house regard me as a curiosity,” Webster answered. “I happened to overhear a very frank statement of their views only this morning. I learned, within a minute, that I was a ‘prehistoric relic,’ ‘a seeker after knowledge’—evidently an opprobrious epithet—that I would make ‘a good watchdog’—the other one, whose name seems to be Bill, is summering at Atlantic City—that I had ‘no bad habits’—another damning bit of evidence—and that I would lend an ‘air of respectability’ to

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‘the roost’ if a professor should happen to call. I learned also that my hat was ‘really very good’ and——”

“Are these boys gentlemen, Mr. Webster?”

“I am sure they are. They were simply indulging in a little extravagant foolery. They would not have hurt my feelings for the world, and they had every reason to think that I was out—I had returned to get a notebook. But I have not told you the most important thing. I have been renamed. I am now to be known as Horace. One of the boys said my ‘official appellation jarred on him,’ and I heartily sympathize with him. I often wondered how I came to be called Publius Virgilius. It’s ridiculous. No one ever thought of calling me Virgil or ‘Pubby’ or ‘Gilly’—just Publius. Think of it, —*Publius!*”

“I am a trifle hazy on the Latin poets, but if I remember correctly, Horace was not intolerant of the lesser vices,” said Miss Pence. “The name seems singularly appropriate, in view of your sudden desire to have ‘your fling.’ ”

“Yes, perhaps it is, and I have about decided to live up to it.” Webster drew a small dark-stained volume from his pocket. “Here is my

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new character set down in iambic measures, very heroically. It is an old translation of the Odes.”

“It looks innocent enough,” Miss Pence remarked.

“Let me recite you some of my verse, and pardon me if I am obliged to refer to—to my manuscript.” Webster thumbed the yellow pages and began to read:

“‘O Bacchus! when by thee possess’d,
What hallow’d spirit fills my raving breast?
How am I rapp’d to dreary glades,
To gloomy caverns, unfrequented shades.’”

“Dear me!” said Miss Pence. “Proceed.”

“‘Now let the bowl with wine be crown’d,
Now lighter dance the mazy round;
And let the sacred couch be stored
With the rich dainties of a Salian board.’”

And here ’s another.

‘But joyous fill the polish’d bowl;
With wine oblivious cheer thy soul,
And from the breathing phials pour
Of essenced sweets a larger shower.’”

“Good gracious, Mr. Webster. I had no idea they were so—so alcoholic.” Miss Pence

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glanced at the small silver watch at her belt. "It is time for me to go to the opening reception. You may read if you wish."

The two, strolling very slowly across the velvet of the Midway, arrived at the reception rather late. The one to blame was Quintus Horatius Flaccus of Venusia and Rome.

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II

Able authorities tell us that there is a marked similarity between a student's activities within and without the classroom, a generalization which seems reasonable. Webster possessed large powers of application. Probably that was why he was so diligent in his new line of research that he missed some interesting points in the seminar. He started with a glass of sour, pink stuff, a bag of peanuts and the book of verse, and after several daily experiments, found himself in his room with the desire for about a barrel of water, and a most annoying feeling somewhere inside of him. He did it alone, partly because he wanted to get used to it and partly to impress the Rhos, who seemed to think he was above such things, and did not invite him on their little excursions. He thought the boys must see that he was not that kind. But they did n't. When they happened to think of him at all, they wondered where on earth he studied so late at night; they were amused when they learned the facts from Dan Freeman.

“You 're a lovely bunch of grinds, you are,”

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jeered Freeman, dropping into the Rho house on Thursday afternoon and finding four of the fellows preparing for a Friday quiz. "I know how you love your dear lessons, but you'll have to desist for the present. It makes me nervous."

As Freeman's only worldly cares consisted in driving a huge red motor-car at a speed that was intended to astonish pedestrians and foil greedy suburban policemen, producing loud and irritating noises whenever and wherever possible, and making the rounds of the fraternity houses for the express purpose of guying such unfortunates as were compelled to waste the summer months in the loathsome pursuit of knowledge, he was promptly told to sit down and be decent, or get out. Pink Hollister, who said he was trying to reduce a page of sophomore Psychology to "straight talk," delivered this ungracious greeting, and received the fervent thanks of Tubby Crandall and Sub-freshman Tompkins, who were killing flies at intervals in their intellectual employment. Ted Larned, stretched on the floor, grunted his approval. Ted was reading a letter from Bugs Landon about the delightfully cool breezes of

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the northern lakes, and he did not wish to be further annoyed, even by the privileged Freeman.

“Don’t be grouchy, Pink,” the visitor airily admonished; “always be civil to company.”

“You ’re not company, Danny. “You ’re—” Pink referred to the psychology page—“you ’re an involuntary sensation, like the sharp bark of a dog close at hand or the heavy slamming of a door.”

Freeman immediately banged the door, barked like a dog and sat down on Larned’s chest, from which position he was instantly rolled by the big football player.

“Say, where ’s Webster?” he asked as he picked himself up. “I remember now, that ’s what I came for—to see if he had recovered.”

Pink closed his text-book, just as he had known he would when he heard Freeman’s car buzzing up to the door. “Why, he ’s not sick. Gone out to buy peppermint drops. Do you know him?” The psychology treatise slid neglected to the floor.

“Of course I do. We ’re quite chummy. I met him last night at the ‘Students’ Rest’. He was leading the orchestra with a beer bottle in

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one hand and a plate in the other when I first saw him.”

“Case of mistaken identity. You have spotted the wrong Mr. Webster, Danny.”

“Oh, I guess not. I brought him here in my car early this morning—dead to the world.”

The four grinds sat up straight and asked questions.

“Do you depose and state, Freeman, that Horace was in the condition vulgarly known as stewed?” asked Larned.

“Pie-eyed?” gasped Pink.

“Sp—spifflicated?” stuttered Tubby. “Do you m—mean he was p—pickled?”

“I doeth,” affirmed Freeman. “But don’t blame me. I was only showing the sights to some wild-eyed cousins. I did n’t corrupt him. I would tell you about it if you had n’t treated me so disrespectfully.” He refused to begin until Tubby apologized for any and all annoyances to which he had or had not been subjected. “Very well, then. Gather round, scandal-mongers, and remember that for once I ’m not blabbing just to hear myself.”

“Certainly not,” Pink assured him. “We never thought of such a thing.”

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“Well, as I said, I was giving Clarence and Percival a glimpse of our so-called Bohemia, and they thought it was simply grand. I did n’t see a chance of any excitement until Webster began to get boisterous. He was sitting at the table next to us, all alone, drinking domestic champagne and trying to eat a lobster with a spoon. All of a sudden he commenced rolling his eyes and then he jumped up on a chair and tried the musical director stunt.”

“W—with v—vine l—l—leaves in his h—hair,” chuckled Tubby, quite missing the tragic gulp of the Ibsen lady from whom he had heard the expression.

“He happened to spill a lot of his wine all over a richly upholstered dame and that started the trouble,” laughed Freeman. “The dame screamed for help and it took six waiters to mop the stuff off her face and hat and get Webster into his seat. It’s a wonder they did n’t call the wagon, but the dame said she did n’t want the old sport pinched, and they let him stay.

“He was just beginning to get quieted down when he saw me and dragged his chair over to our table. He told me that he lived here and said he knew me—must have seen me here the

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other day. It 's lucky he told me, because he got silly right away and never said another sane word. He called a waiter and ordered a lot of vile stuff for us to drink before we could stop him. Then he began to get off some of the sloppiest drivel I ever heard. He recited a bunch of poetry and said he was the author of it. Said he was Horace and I was Maecenas and Percival was Augustus Caesar and Clarence was somebody else. Claimed he knew all of the chorus ladies in the place—called 'em Lydia and Pyrrha and Glycera and Chloe and so on—regular Latin 3 dope. All about the 'gul—orious days of Rome' and 'fill the flowing bowl.' It got entirely too loud for me—everybody was looking at us, and you know how modest I am. I paid the bill and sprinted, and we pulled the poet out with us."

"Listen to that, young fellow," Larned accused Mansfield Garrett Tompkins. "You named him Horace the other day—remember?"

"Gee whiz!" said Mansfield Garrett. "Do you suppose he heard me?"

"No, he was out of the house at the time. You just happened to hit it. He teaches the Horace thing. See, here's the pony he rides." Pink

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held up the book he had found in the hall. "He must have gone regularly dotty over it."

"Whatever the complicated motives may be, he did it fine," said Freeman. "But he whispered to me once behind his hand that his name was n't really Horace, but Webster. Said he was only pretending. On the way home he got off something about wanting to show people that he was a good sort, and could spend his money. Said I was the only friend he had on 'earsh'. I thought for a minute that he might be talking sense, but he went to sleep then and we had to carry him upstairs. The Lord only knows where he'd be now if I had n't snatched him from the rum demon."

"He 'd be in the g—g—gutter, where all w—wine-bibbers g—go to," said Tubby, positively. "W—wonder where he is now?"

As if in answer to the question, Webster entered by the hall door and started upstairs to his room. He had slipped in quietly, as he always did.

"Come on in," Larned called to him heartily. "We 're having a talk-fest. I believe you know Freeman, don't you, Webster?"

"I think I saw you here the other day, Mr.

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Freeman," said Webster. "I'm very glad to know you." There was no recognition of the more intimate meeting of the night before, either in his formal handshake or his glance. Freeman, prepared to be cordial, wondered whether this was because Webster wished absolutely to overlook the incident of the 'Students' Rest,' or because he did not care to mention it in a company. The others, noting the omission, ceremoniously asked him to be seated and forgot to talk. Something in the man's appearance and manner made the stock remarks about headache and repentance seem out of place. For he was very pale—paler than ever, and his eyes were sunken. He looked ill and tired. A new hat of an exaggerated pattern much affected by Tubby Crandall, a new waistcoat of painfully clashing shades of red and tan, a loud yellow necktie and a fancy handkerchief flowing gayly from his breast pocket, were strikingly incongruous.

"It's damned hot, and don't you forget it," he spoke up, fanning himself with the fancy handkerchief. "Dammit, I am thoroughly exhausted."

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“It certainly is warm,” Larned assented, in a surprised tone.

“You bet, dammit.” And Webster supplemented the remark with a string of labored and self-conscious profanity that surprised Larned still more and caused Tubby and Pink to exchange solemn winks. The words he used were not very shocking, and he spoke them without the least emotion, as if he had been reciting a lesson in a language that he did not understand.

“I was out pretty late last night,” he continued. “Something doing. I think somebody must have brought me home.”

Freeman began to understand. So the fellow had really been so drunk that he could not remember!

“Is that so?” Larned said indifferently.

“Yes, I ’m going out again tonight. Damned dull around here. I wish you fellows would come along,” and he used more unnecessary words. “We can have a swell time—a little liquor, eh, Mr. Larned?”

“Thanks, Webster, but I can’t go. I have some studying to do. I ’m making up a lot of work just now,” Ted answered.

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Webster laughed, implying clearly that he did not believe Larned. "Oh, I guess you 'll come," he said. "I 've got the coin. You other fellows come, too. A little refreshment, eh, boys?"

"I don't drink, Webster, and neither does Tompkins," replied Larned. "And Hollister and Crandall have some cramming to keep them busy." Pink and Tubby glanced at Ted curiously. They felt able to answer for themselves.

"How about you, Mr. Freeman?" Webster insisted.

"I have to stay at home with some cousins of mine. They never go out—regular stay-at-homes are Augustus and——" Freeman stopped abruptly at a frowning signal from Larned.

"Oh, all right. We 'll go some other time. I thought maybe you would. I 'm going out to get some fresh air now. It's too damned hot in here, dammit." Webster put on his new hat and walked unsteadily across the room to the door, whistling. He paused there and looked back; the china-blue eyes were pathetic.

"Wait a second, Webster," Ted called. "I 'll tell you how we can fix it up. You roll back here about ten o'clock when we 've done digging and

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we 'll all go out together and cut up a little. And I want you to go somewhere with me in the morning—over to the University Settlement. Will you?"

"Yes, I will. I 'll be back then." Webster left, and the grinds found their tongues.

"W—well, I 'll be fl—flimflammed," panted Tubby. "H—harmless H—Horace, the 'orrible ex—example!"

"He certainly has changed for the better," tittered Mansfield Garrett Tompkins.

"Am I a liar or am I not?" asked Freeman.

"What 's the matter with you, Ted?" demanded Pink. "Tubby and I were just going to take him up on the bright light proposition. What made you butt in?"

"Nothing 's the matter with me," said Larned, quietly. "And I don't think I spoiled anything. Think it over. It may grow on you."

Ted lighted his pipe, crossed his legs and looked at the ceiling. His attitude suggested perfect peace, but his brothers knew that he was not so calm as he looked and that presently he would "open up."

"What has wrought these wonders?" piped

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Tompkins. "He was scared of himself the first day."

Pink's reply was unexpected. He returned, oracularly:

"When vine-crown'd Bacchus leads the way,
What can his daring votaries dismay?"

You see," he explained, exhibiting the yellow-backed book, "Horace the Second is following the teachings of Horace the First. Very simple."

"He certainly made a holy show of himself, didn't he?" Freeman remarked. "It was a shame."

"Oh, wake up," rejoined Pink. "And

'While we lie with roses crown'd,
Let the cheerful bowl go round.'

Only there won't be any bowl for us. But I don't care.

'I tell thee, boy, that I detest
The grandeur of a Persian feast.'

So do I, but I don't think much of that rhyme."

"Neither do I," complained Tompkins. "I wish you 'd stop reading that trash." He be-

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gan throwing pillows, which Pink warded off with his feet, replying glibly:

“Here bid this impious clamour cease,
And press the social couch in peace.

‘For Thracianlike I’ll drink to day
And deeply Bacchus it away.’

My, what an old soak he was. Pretty good sense sometimes, too. Oh, listen:

‘Tear from the bursting glebe the’ uprooted tree.’

What’s a glebe, Danny? I wonder if Webster tears from the bursting tree the uprooted glebe.”

“Is that all you wonder about him, Pink?” Larned stopped looking at the wall and uncrossed his legs.

“Oh, my, no!” cried Hollister. “I wonder why somebody does n’t poison him.”

“I don’t suppose it ever occurred to you that people besides yourself and Tubby have any feelings of their own?”

“I really can’t say. But I know there’s a fellow in my nine o’clock that has n’t any. He parts his hair down the back and has to blow his whiskers out of the way before he can talk.”

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Pink illustrated by puffing down his chin and performing elementary swimming motions with his arms.

“That ’s about the kind of character sketch you hear a good deal of in college.” Larned had not shouted with the rest, and his tone was so serious that even Freeman gave attention. “Laugh at everybody. Laugh at everything. Laugh at yourself. I don’t mean you, Pink, but all of us. It ’s the sort of thing Webster expects. The man has decided that we are a bunch of padded-cell candidates and tin-horn booze artists, I ’ll bet you. And he ’s out to act the same part. You may think I ’m crazy, but that ’s got something to do with the way he ’s making such a fool of himself right now. And I don’t like to see him treated like a dime museum freak just because he drew a few hasty conclusions.”

“This is your doing, Tubby,” Pink broke in. “Horace is imitating *you*.”

“W—what m—makes him do t—t—that?”

Tubby’s question was so innocently suggestive of the foolishness of such a procedure that Ted smiled.

“That, Tubby,” he said, “is just what I ’m

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getting at in my own feeble way. Do you suppose it could possibly be because he 's trying to be sociable? Do you suppose he ever gets lonesome, or that he just wants to be treated like a nice marble statue? Oh, I know he 's been treated decently here—much better than he would have been at some places I know of. We 've all been very polite to him, but I can conceive of times when that would get pretty flat. Don't you see that——”

“Sure,” Pink nodded; “I see the whole thing. Lonely old sheep among sportive young lambs. Lonely old sheep over-sportives himself. Lambs feel awful bad.”

“Didn't you see how he looked when we turned him down just now?” Larned asked. “He was hurt—hurt clear through. That 's why I asked him to go along with us tonight—and to go to the Settlement with me. I know what he needs. And I know he has n't any money. That 's why I declined your supper-party invitation for you, Pink. We 'll have a little something anyway—on your uncle Teddy, and we 'll get Webster to bed early. And you 'll all go along and act right. You know what I mean.”

Pink nodded sagely.

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“Sportive young lambs organize ready relief expedition for over-sportive old sheep. We ’ll all be there, Ted. I ’d just as soon be a reformer for a few minutes. But don’t look so blooming fierce about it. Just

‘Mix a short folly with thy labour’d schemes;
’Tis joyous folly that unbends the mind.’”

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III

“I believe,” said Miss Pence, as she seated herself on the Midway bench, “that we agreed to compare notes in ‘studentology.’ We have had just a week in which to gather data.”

“Just a week, I think.”

Webster’s reply lacked enthusiasm. He was not certain that he wished to reopen the subject. For while it would afford him a dignified opportunity to account for his absence—he had been trying to think of a plausible answer to Miss Pence’s inevitable inquiry about his cutting—he was uncomfortably conscious that several important episodes would have to be omitted.

“Have you tried your new remedy for ‘rustiness,’ and is it a success?”

“I ’d forgotten that I used such striking symbols,” Webster said hastily. “I fancy that my talk the other day was rather trivial, after all—not worth checking up. I should much prefer to tell you about a most unique trip I took last Friday.”

But Miss Pence had no intention of interest-

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ing herself in irrelevant phenomena while engaged in noting a major test. If Webster had observed reactions, she wished to be informed of them, and of their cause and effect, direct and indirect; if mistakes had been made she desired to place a scientific finger upon them, eliminate them, reconstruct the imperfect steps of the experiment, and proceed upon the firm basis of facts.

“I insist upon facing the main question, nevertheless,” she said. “You know I have been collecting material of my own, and I mean to set it forth in due time—after you have finished.”

“And I shall have to insist upon talking of my trip. For it disposed, in a way, of what you call the main question; it acted, I may say, as the cure. To be brief, I visited the University Settlement on Friday and remained there half the day; when I left I had arranged to spend a considerable part of my time there for the rest of the summer. I intend to teach a class, if they will permit me to do so. That is where you find your raw material, Miss Pence. It’s a wonderful place. I don’t know when anything has had such a stimulating effect upon

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me. It has given me the inspiration to deliver a course of lectures this winter."

"In the third-rate opera-house in the third-rate town?"

"Yes, I've recovered my perspective, you see. The only wonder is that it took me four days to do it."

"And what about 'your fling' and 'kicking up your heels?' Who took you to the Settlement?" Miss Pence was almost forgetting to be scientific.

"I went with one of the young men at the house—a Mr. Larned. He instructs a class of boys in physical culture."

"And so, after all, one of the pagans furnished the impulse——led you out of darkness into light."

"Not at all, Miss Pence. He happened to ask me by the merest chance. You may depend upon it that Mr. Larned never gave it a second thought."

"But even if that is true, surely we must give him credit for the cure," Miss Pence urged. "I am inclined to think he must have had some motive in taking you. Surely he has the place at heart if he teaches there?"

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“I doubt it. He calls his pupils ‘dirty little beggars’ and actually makes light of his own connection with the work. He intimated that he was doing it to ‘make a hit’ with the faculty. No, I think it quite unnecessary to manufacture any heroic qualities to fit Mr. Larned’s figure.”

Miss Pence glanced up swiftly, but no sign betrayed her cool surprise and displeasure. She seldom displayed emotion. She quickly reviewed her prearranged brief of argument, and clicked off one of the headings:

“Leaving the question of Mr. Larned, do you still consider yourself archaic?”

“I do, in the sense that I have discovered myself quite incapable of enjoying the diversions of early youth. However, I proved that I could, upon occasion, simulate the spirit of the young college boy.” He began to choose his words more carefully. “Having, as you know, determined to—to make myself congenial to a crowd of these boys—I—I may say, I became, perhaps, less—less dignified than is likely to occur again.”

“I hope you did not find it necessary to emulate the example of our bibulous poet—Horace?”

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Webster colored. "I have at least proved, to my own satisfaction, that an air of flippancy and 'don't care' is the key to the friendship of these young men," he said. "I was merely a 'prehistoric relic' and a person of no importance whatever while I remained in my own character. But behold! I allow myself to appear as—as thoughtless and slangy as they. Immediately they become friendly and insist upon entertaining me. The inference is clear. Doubtless they consider me as frivolous as themselves. Really, Miss Pence I now have no longing for that kind of existence. It was not what I wanted." He repeated the last statement with slow emphasis.

"But I still hope to be of service to the boys," he resumed, "if only in helping them cultivate worthier habits—if, indeed, I succeed in getting close enough to them. At present their manner seems rather consciously repressed. When we were out together the other evening they were considerably more—more temperate and quiet than I suspect was natural."

"Than you *suspect!*" Miss Pence exclaimed. "I fear you weaken your position by that statement, Mr. Webster. For my part, I must con-

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fess myself slightly prejudiced in favor of the boys, although I base my opinion on purely second-hand information. A Miss Miller—Miss Margery Miller—a most sensible girl with whom I have become well acquainted in Foster, gave me a much different account of your new friends. She knows them very well—I think her father is a member of the Rho society. She is one of the most popular girls in the University, I am told. She gives me to understand that this Mr. Larned is one of the ablest young men here, and that the others stand well up in scholarship and in the better class of University activities. She considers them exceptionally talented.”

“They are brilliant,” Webster admitted, “but in a peculiarly misdirected fashion. One of them has extraordinary mimetic powers; his imitations of various professors and clergymen are quite realistic. Another is a pianist; I heard him playing the Doxology this morning,—in ragtime. Larned, I am informed, is known throughout the country for his ability in the game of football. Mr. Hollister told me that he was always able to make his opponent resemble ‘a copper cent with a hole in it.’ I overheard

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one of the others boasting that he held the world's record for 'inhaling one-half liter of liquid bread,' which means, no doubt, that he is a particularly dexterous swimmer. Do you think Miss Miller's estimate is based upon these accomplishments, Miss Pence?"

"Not at all. I consider her too sensible. I think very well of her judgment, although I must admit that she is inclined to speak rather lightly of important matters. At first I expected nothing but nonsense from her; I suppose that was because she is so pretty and popular. I found her quite different. Her sociological views are wholesome and vigorous. For that reason I do not hesitate to attach weight to her fresh and interesting analyses of University questions—to her estimate of Mr. Larned and the other young men. I fancy that she is typical of the young college girl—and, in a sense, of the young men, as well. She is a very healthy embodiment of the undergraduate idea."

"A thing, which, if it exists, I have been unable to find," was Webster's comment. "What further words of wisdom did this immature young person see fit to speak? What, I may say, is the undergraduate idea?"

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Now, Miss Sarah Pence, who, as you know, was a "remarkable little woman," was blessed with what is called a saving sense of humor, and the fact that she religiously discouraged this valuable possession had not completely dulled it. Once or twice in a month she permitted herself to laugh silently while preserving an outward demeanor of perfect serenity—an act which she considered a none too justifiable form of dissembling. Perhaps this was one of the rare occasions. That would account for the almost imperceptible flicker in her gray eyes and the tone of gentle relish in her voice as she replied to Webster:

"Miss Miller told me that she was taking her education 'as painlessly as possible.' She told me that she supposed there was more than one way of doing the same thing in this world, and as she believed we all had *some* sense or we would not be in the University in the first place, she imagined the Lord intended us to use it in picking out our way to do it. She defended your young friends on that ground. 'Mr. Larned is not only an athlete,' she said; 'he is also deeply interested in the uplift and he dances beautifully.' As for herself, she

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said she was well aware that a number of people considered her 'a feather-brained little fool' because she did not 'go moping about with a Schopenhauer expression.' I understand that Miss Miller is an exceptionally fine student. But perhaps we need not dwell on that phase of it?" Miss Pence looked up with the smallest possible suggestion of amusement in her raised eyebrows.

"I fear it would not repay our attention, Miss Pence. We have already spent the better part of half an hour in much the same sort of fruitless reflection. We shall just have time to look over the seminar syllabus. And I must copy your outline of Professor Whitler's lectures. I missed three meetings, did I not?"

Webster unbuckled his book-strap and pulled out a pad of paper, stooping to pick up a small dark-covered volume that had tumbled to the ground at his feet. "How annoying!" he exclaimed. "I intended to return this to the library this afternoon. I have finished with it."

Miss Pence reached for the book. "Why," she said, "it's Horace. I had quite forgotten him. And I see he has been liberally turned down and underscored. Let me see:

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'Thou late my deep anxiety and fear,
And now my fond desire and tender care,
Ah! yet take heed, avoid those fatal seas,
Which roll among the shining Cyclades.'

And on the next page:

'Me too the heat of youth to madness fired,
And with Iambic rapid rage inspired.
But now repentant shall the Muse again
To softer numbers tune her melting strain.'

Dear me! Our poet seems strangely moderate today—almost timid. Ah!—

'Let others quaff the racy wine
To whom kind fortune gives the vine.

'To *you* boon Nature frankly yields
Her wholesome salad from the fields.'

Miss Pence regarded the last lines with something like surprise. "The penciled alteration in the text obviously carries a message," she observed. "Mr. Webster, did you mark these lines to warn the tribe of pagans?"

Webster bent over and scrutinized the page. He shook his head. "No," he said; "I did not. I think some pagans marked them for—for somebody else. And the particular pagans who did it—"

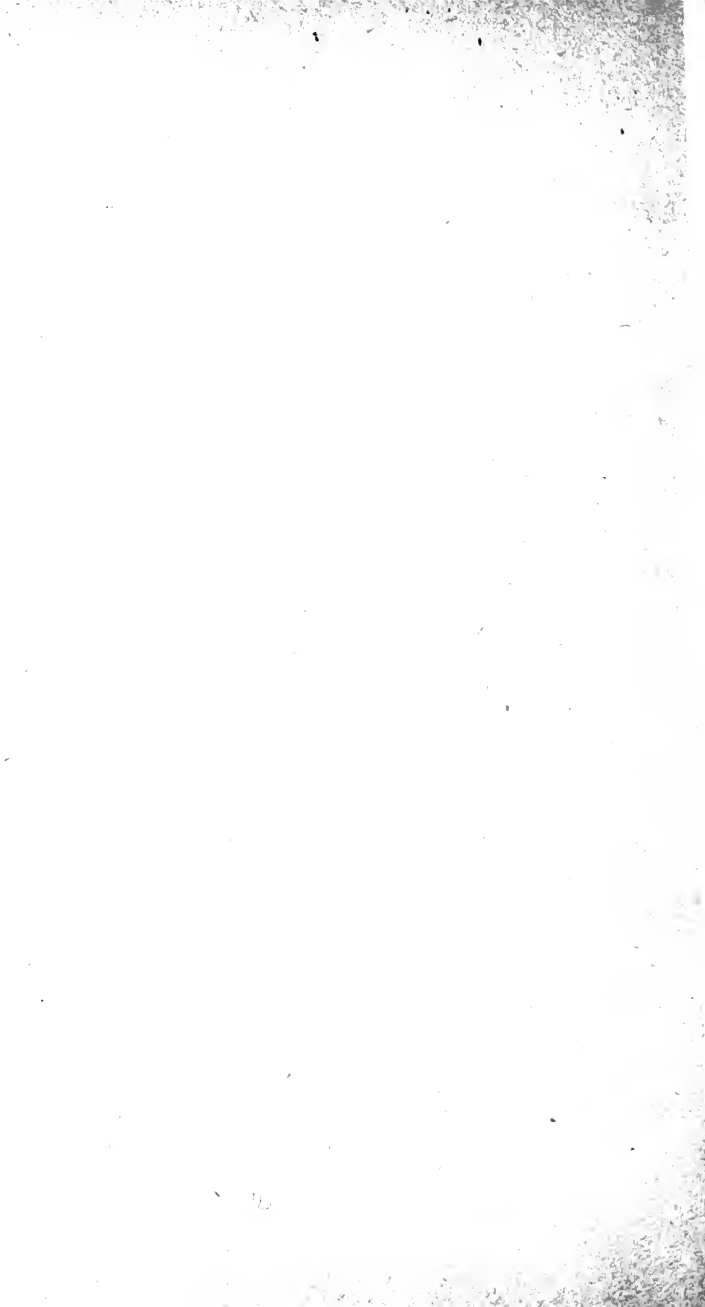
The hoarse, joyous toot of an automobile horn interrupted.

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A big red motor, loaded down with boys and golf clubs and noise, whizzed past. A noisy, maroon-sweatered giant, piled upon a pyramid of smaller fellows, shouted a muffled "Hello!" from the back seat. They were gone.

Webster smiled. "You see," he said, "they are demonstrating the 'painless' method. They are heathens. But I'm rather glad to know them, anyhow."

"Yes!" Miss Pence closed the little yellowed book with a snap and laid it on the bench. "Yes, indeed!" she said. "It's so educating." She began at once to read aloud from her lecture notes, while Webster was polishing his spectacles.



THE INDISCRETIONS OF YVONNE DE LA PLAISANCE

I

L OVELY, absolutely lovely! Oh, beautiful!" Otto von Pickleschnitzel threw aside his "Metaphysic of Ethics," clapped his forefingers in mild applause and beamed along a large, scarlet nose at Yvonne de la Plaisance, shrieking discordant mirth in the doorway.

"Great! Just the right touch of abandon, as Wakey would say. Is n't Yvonne immense?" He appealed to Raggio, Count di Bummi, who was striking attitudes before a mirror propped upon the bookcase.

"Immense is good, especially as to feet and mouth," agreed the count, vainly endeavoring to get the full effect of his costume by pirouetting rapidly before the looking-glass. "Too bad," fondly surveying his pointed mustachios, "that Squib was born that way."

Otto von Pickleschnitzel arose and slapped Yvonne de la Plaisance upon the chest in hearty admiration. "Keep it up," he cried; "but don't

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yowl so loud. You 're becoming unladylike. Now we 'll try our great emotional scene." He adjusted his putty nose. "Vooman, vo ist mein card-case?"

"Pocketbook, Otto—pocketbook," corrected a person in a green-and-yellow gown, who was playing solitaire on the floor. Do you suppose she has swiped your pawn-checks? And r—r—roll your r's."

"There are n't any r's in it, Lucretia. Vooman, vo ist mein pocketbook?" repeated Otto. "Vo is it—scorn me now, Squib. Scorn, you pin-head."

But Yvonne de la Plaisance did not scorn. She tumbled on the bed and kicked at the air, to the consternation of her co-stars of the "Raz-Daz" company and the wrath of Bugs Landon, who was trying to finish a theme while the Blackfriars disported themselves in their comic opera clothes.

"It 's the sillies again. Let him—let her alone," advised Count di Bummi, gazing anxiously at the soubrette, who was now turning somersaults on Landon's cot, regardless of red satin gown and hat.

"Is there a physician present?" the count in-

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quired, from the top of Landon's study-table.

"Or a needle and thread?" added Von Pickleschnitzel. "Or a hatpin?"

Yvonne recovered instantly and sat up, bedraggled and weak.

"Go on back, 'docs.' There will be no murder here tonight," announced the count, waving away an imaginary horde of applicants. "Go back, I tell you," and his cane, aimed at a particularly bloodthirsty man of medicine, flicked a plume from Lucretia Nearly's bonnet.

"Professor Lampsen!" gasped Yvonne de la Plaisance. "At last old Lampy has got his."

"Dead?" queried Lucretia, pleasantly.

"Lampy — Ezekiel Swayback Lampsen," panted Yvonne.

"What 's up, Squib?" asked Landon, who had folded his paper on "The Inquisition" and indorsed it to Professor Ezekiel Swaybill Lampsen.

Yvonne de la Plaisance, otherwise Squib Morris, sophomore, repaired a damaged piece of lace by tearing it off and throwing it out of the window before answering:

"Why, he followed me—chased me all over the campus—puddles and all—in this get-up."

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The "get-up" was slightly damaged by the mud—and the somersaults. The red satin gown was wrinkled and splotted with dirty water, and several delicate medallions of lace hung by single threads. The brim of the Gainsborough hat drooped in the back; wisps of the brunette wig straggled over Squib's bare shoulders. The costume committee had been loath to part with these treasures of the "Raz-Daz" wardrobe, even on Squib's excuse of an engagement with a photographer before the dress rehearsal in the evening.

"How did it happen?" insisted Landon. "I have to go to dinner, so hurry."

The Count di Bummi, known more familiarly as Petey Strong, seating himself on the cot beside Squib, enforced Landon's remark by painlessly extracting a strand of black hair from the soubrette's head. Lucretia Nearly, catalogued in the Recorder's office as Frank Westmore, sat upon the lap of Al Otto von Pickleschnitzel Taylor and stared at Squib through thick Maiden Aunt spectacles, overshadowed by Maiden Aunt ringlets.

"Chased you? Lampy chased you? What for?" repeated Landon.

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Squib was parading around the room, feigning contemptuous indifference toward the excitement he had created. "Oh, just ran after me. Do you blame him? I drew him on," and he straightened his Gainsborough, not at all daintily.

"Why, the shameless old goat," ejaculated Petey Strong. "I never thought he was quite so saintly as he looks. But flagrant fussing in the open! This is monstrous."

"Did he get a good look at you?" inquired Lucretia Nearly, incredulously.

"Rot! What did Lampy really do?" Landon gently forced the red satin adventuress into a chair.

"Several things. It was n't my looks, Bugs,—that is, not entirely. It might have been the cigarette, or the *lingerie*, or the language I used, or—oh, Lord! there goes a button or something—or it might have been that last high kick."

"Did you kick the old goat?" shouted Petey.

"No, I did n't do much of anything. It was Lampy that did the cutting up. I was just coming along past Cobb with my eyes cast modestly upon the sidewalk, smoking one of those out-

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door cigarettes Lucretia gave me. I ran into Lampy, jerking along as he always does—you know. There was n't a soul in sight; so of course I had to do something, didn't I? Well——”

“Certainly, absolutely had to,” assented Von Pickleschnitzel Taylor.

“It was almost dark, and Lampy is so blind that I thought I 'd fool him just for a minute. So I said: ‘Why, if it is n't Professor Lampsen. How *do* you do,’ like this.” Squib gave an accurate imitation of a croupy phonograph.

“How did you ever think of it, Squib?”

“It *was* clever, was n't it, Bugs? I was afraid Lampy would get wise, but he did n't. He thought, of course, I was one of his pet sharks in her Sunday best. He stopped and said, ‘Beautiful evening,’ and I was so fussed that I said, ‘Like hell it is.’ Lampy was sort of taken off his legs, I think. He kind of rattled in his throat, like an old hen. So I took a good puff at my ‘cig’ and let it out hard, but that did n't help any. Lampy nearly fell over backwards.

“I thought he would get on to the joke then, but not he. I started to confess and apologize, but he looked so foolish that I simply could n't

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do it. So I started to leave. He grabbed at me and wanted my name, but I kept my mouth shut and did one of those acrobatic kicks for an answer. I kept backing up and kicking until he made a rush for me and then——”

“Did he really come at you?” exploded the Maiden Aunt.

“Come? Well, he jerked much faster than usual. He headed me off, so I hiked for the other side of the campus. I worried him a little by jumping behind the trees, and I chinned myself several times on the scrub oaks while he was catching up with me. I was trying to act loony, and I think I succeeded. He almost had me once. These blamed fripperies tangled up my legs. He can go some when he feels like it.

“I sprinted when we got over by the Law Building—made straight for the Girls’ Halls and flopped down back of the hedge and crawled along until I got to some bushes. Lucky I had that light overcoat on. Lampy came up like a wheezy traction-engine and stopped stock still in front of Foster. Thought I lived there, I suppose. I was dying to have him ring, and ask for the girl in red, but he did n’t. Just stood and looked at the door a while and then jerked

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back toward Cobb. I could hear him muttering to himself."

This was interesting. The "Raz-Daz" principals celebrated with an impromptu waltz. Yvonne de la Plaisance danced with Raggio, Count di Bummi; and Lucretia Nearly, sliding off Otto von Pickelschnitzel's lap, forced the German comedian to share the fun. Yvonne stopped before Landon and inquired:

"Well, Bugs, what 's the next chapter?"

"The next what?"

"What are we going to do to Lampy?"

"Nothing, I suppose."

"Nothing? Listen, Al, he says we are not going to punish Lampy for his unheard of curiosity and unprofessional conduct. Do you mean to say, Bugs, that you disapprove of carrying the thing to its logical conclusion?"

"Which would be?"

"I don't know yet. Something appropriate. Something to fit the crime."

"You might run over and apologize to Lampy right now," Landon suggested. "Let *him* decide. He 's good at passing sentence."

"I 'm not the criminal in this case, you fool."

"Oh!"

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Squib gave the senior a glance of displeasure. This from Bugs Landon, the practical joker! For Landon's exploits in his sophomore year were still remembered. Bugs was older now, and disapproved of Squib's attempts to establish himself as his successor. Several of Squib's recent "joking" achievements had been highly indiscreet, and it had taken a quantity of earnest conversation with a certain dean to square him. The boy was in grave danger of becoming a gifted "prof-baiter," much to Landon's distress.

"Do you mean to stand up and be a moral leader or something like that, Bugs?" Squib demanded. "Do you forget the time you broke up the prayer meeting with Japanese snuff, and the time you nearly scared Professor Richards into nervous prostration with that ghost-walking stunt? Will you or will you not contribute a small portion of your gray matter to this grand and noble cause?" he finished, unaware of the thoughts he was arousing in Landon.

"I think you need a good object lesson," said Bugs. Then, as if happily inspired, "Will you agree to follow my instructions?"

"To the bitter end." The "Raz-Daz" come-

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dians raised their right hands in pledge of blind allegiance.

“Very well,” said Landon. “Come in,” he called when somebody rattled the door. “Locked? Come in anyway.” He opened the door and admitted a small colored boy, who hauled a large basket into the room.

Squib explained:

“We had our dinner sent over from the Commons—these rigs are so infernally hard to get on that we could n’t take ’em off before the dress rehearsal. Stay and eat with us, Bugs. You may have half of Petey’s food. We ought to treat you right, because it ’s your room, you know. Here’s your tainted money, Choc’late Drop. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for bringing such a stingy batch of stuff over here.”

Landon inspected the top layer of the uncovered basket with intense disfavor. “Thanks,” he said, “but I just happen to remember that I have an important date. I ’ll meet you at rehearsal if I can get past the door. I ’ll have the punishment worked up by that time. See you later.”

“I ’ll tell you what we ’ll do to Lampy,” be-

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gan the Count di Bummi, when Landon had gone. "We 'll——"

"Don't dissipate your valuable intellect that way, Peter," warned Squib. "Just pin your throbbing little hopes on Mr. Buggy Landon, who is right. Sweep off the tables, please."

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II

In the expert opinion of Wakefield, the Blackfriar coach, the "Raz-Daz" comedians were "simply rotten" at rehearsal. They missed their cues, forgot their lines and almost disorganized the company. Wakefield thought that Yvonne de la Plaisance was a "wooden Indian," and that Taylor should have been cast as the Third Villager, who had a deep thinking part, broken only by the exclamation, "Let us flee!" just before the entrance of the angry mob, six strong. He also thought complimentary things about Lucretia and the count, to the great delight of the principals, who loved to see old Wakey worked up.

"No, no, no—stop right there." Wakefield clapped his hands angrily and ran to the center of the stage, interrupting a dialogue between Yvonne and Otto on the castle steps. "You 'll have to put some ginger into that joke, Taylor, and you might work in a few of the original lines. You 're balling things up fierce. You seem to have something more important on your mind."

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Taylor repeated his speech with so much animation that the scenery swayed threateningly. The members of the honeysuckle ballet, preparing to frisk in the castle garden, nudged each other and tittered, whereupon Wakefield gave them his attention.

“You, Third Flower Maiden,” he shouted, “quit squatting that way. Straighten up! Straighten up!”

“He can’t. He’s bowlegged,” volunteered the Third Flower Maiden’s dancing partner. Wakefield froze the truthful coryphée into silence while the ballet sniggered. Somebody observed, in a loud whisper, that Wakey’s face was dirty.

“Finish your scene and get off stage, Morris,” roared the coach. “And you’d better study your lines between acts.”

Squib followed a part of this advice. He hurried into the wings, but not to find his part.

“What have you been trying to tell me?” he asked Taylor. “I could n’t remember my merry jests, trying to hear you.”

“Run back there and find Red Wallace. He’s got great news about Lampy.”

“Where’s Bugs?”

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“Out in front. I ’ll get him. Meet me in the big room downstairs. Find Westmore, too.”

The largest basement dressing-room was occupied by a motley group of conspirators during the honeysuckle ballet and the ensuing intermission. Landon was there, and the four chief “Raz-Daz” comedians; also Red Wallace, dressed as Lena, the Miller’s Daughter, and James Gordon, a senior Blackfriar, cast as Whoop-La, the Court Jester. Gordon had insisted upon being present, smiling affably at the pointed hints dropped by Squib. Red had been drafted by Landon as a plotter in good standing because of some valuable suggestions he had made.

“Lock the door,” commanded Wallace. “Don’t let anyone in—not even Wakey.”

“What’s this great piece of news, Red?” Squib asked excitedly.

“It’s about Lampy. He’s out for blood. ‘Summary expulsion’ in his eye.”

“How did he know who it was?”

“He did n’t. He does n’t even now.”

“Go on, there’s the first act curtain,” said Landon.

Red obediently began: “I was telephoning

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in Cobb—trying to get Foster Hall, when Lampy came in and had a conniption in the next booth. He got Professor Bundy on the wire in a minute and began unburdening himself. And there I was trying to get Foster. I was going to——”

“Stick to Lampy,” ordered Landon.

“Well, it seems that he and Bundy are getting up some kind of a debate on ‘Co-education: Why Is it?’ and he wanted to see Bundy right away about it. Some meeting down-town tomorrow night. Then he broke loose on the subject of girl. It was pathetic. Awfully stirred up.

“He said: ‘My dear Bundy, I’ve had a most extraordinary experience—most unusual and disturbing. It has raised grave doubts in my mind as to several of the premises we have laid down in our paper. The point concerning female culture at co-educational institutions may have to be changed, I fear.’ The old boy rambled on that way until I got Foster, and then I had to hold the wire while he got off some more bunk.”

“Hurry up. Tell him what’s doing.” Landon winked at Red significantly.

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“Lampy squeaked worse than I ever heard him,” Red continued glibly. “Said: ‘I really cannot relate my experience over the telephone. It is too shocking. I will say, however, that a young woman student has just taken the grossest liberties in my presence. I hesitate to say what her intentions may have been or what may have induced her——’”

“Oh, pure, unspotted virtue,” sighed Squib.

“It was getting too scandalous for me; so I got out of there and ducked into the lecture-room to study a while before dinner.”

“This is good,” remarked Petey Strong. “Is n’t it, Squib?”

“Here ’s where you get it strong, Squib,” Red proceeded. “I had n’t been in there five minutes before in came Lampy and Bundy. Never noticed me at all, even when I coughed, and I could n’t leave very well after they got started. You see, Bundy had rushed to the scene to hear the whole salacious tale. And he got it, hot off the bat. Lampy said to Bundy: ‘I am quite certain that the young—er—person is a student of this institution. She called me by name. I was amazed at the cigarette and you may imagine my astonishment at

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her other actions. To think of her actually kicking at me and—and using an oath. Shocking! Shocking!’ He said he followed you to your room merely to get your number, and that he was completely flabbergasted when he traced you to Foster. He ’s absolutely certain that you live there.’”

“What are they going to do with me?” laughed Squib, swinging his legs comfortably from the dressing-table.

“Lampy is inclined to be merciful. Does n’t want any rumpus, but thinks that you should be carted off the campus as soon as possible. He is going to appoint a select committee of Junior College deans to investigate the matter sanely and conservatively, and report at the next faculty meeting. Bundy wanted to go right over to Foster and raise the devil, but Lampy would n’t stand for it. ‘Think of the scandal, my dear Bundy,’ he said. ‘Think of the poor creature’s parents. I suppose she has a father and mother somewhere.’ Bundy could n’t deny this, so he gave in, but the doings will start Monday sure.”

“All is not girl that wears silkatino,” said Squib. “Did n’t either of them think it might

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be a Blackfriar? Didn't they ever hear of 'Raz-Daz,' the greatest show on earth?"

"They will tomorrow if they haven't already," wailed Westmore. "Then it will be all up."

"Don't worry, Franky," Red consoled him. "Everybody else will, but that pair won't. They're not people. They are just intellect. They haven't the faintest idea what goes on here. Too busy hating themselves. Why, they even considered your personal charms without getting wise, Squib."

"You need n't repeat that part of it."

"Oh, it was n't bad. Lampy simply said that your general physiognomy indicated a sort of congenital depravity, though some might consider you pretty, in a brazen, vulgar sense. They were discussing that point when they got up and left. I was about ready to jump out the window."

"Very good, indeed," chuckled Squib. "Assembly of deans; investigation of women's halls; innocent lady student canned; Lampy saved. And I thought he was chasing me for a knock-down. All right, Bugs, you have the floor. Read your resolution."

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Landon moved his chair farther from the Blackfriars. "This new angle necessitates a slight shift in the arrangements," he said solemnly. "I prefer to listen to suggestions and decide upon the deed later. I'll hear you one by one. What do you think, Lucretia?"

"In my humble opinion," said Westmore, "the injured innocence gag would go down with Lampy. I move that we, the loving relatives of Miss de la Plaisance, hasten at once to the room of the aforesaid Lampy and tell him what we think of his disgusting approaches. We'll have to tone Squib down a bit, because he looks a little too—too unconventional. I will be the poor innocent dove's mother, and as such, will baste the brute over the head with a handkerchief if he does n't take back his harsh words. I can give him some hot stuff along that line. Want me to try it?"

"No, thanks," said Landon. "Your plan is utterly pointless. Otherwise, it is good. Next, Otto von Pickleschnitzel!"

Taylor responded from a pile of costumes on the floor:

"Squib, you be a long lost friend of his boyhood days. Pretend you know him—used to

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get soused with him and all that. Draw him out along that line. I'd like to hear him confess to something stronger than Commons milk. Tell him you used to know him in Paris—came back here specially to see him. Rig up some compromising letters and hint at blackmail. Watch him squirm. I half believe he is a reformed sport—the old hypocrite! How's that, Buggy?"

"Very primitive. Your mentality must be running low tonight. I'm surprised at you. The next speaker of the evening will be Yvonne de la Plaisance. Ready, Squib!"

"I think we'd better pull off the repent-of-our-sins act," said the soubrette. "That will be easy, effective and more humorous than the ridiculous suggestions advanced by these would-be romancers. I will confess to the cigarette, absinthe, morphine, and cramming habits, and lay my strange actions to these. I'll throw myself on his mercy and tell him about my sister and thirty-one mothers—I mean my mother and thirty-one sisters. That ought to stun him."

"And then?" suggested Landon.

"After he's forgiven me, I'll just say,

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‘Cheer up, Lampy, old sport. It ’s only a joke. Have a cigar.’ ”

“Comment deferred,” intoned Landon.
“Count di Bum!”

“I favor something more exciting,” said Petey. “Let Squib impersonate an escaped lunatic. It would be so easy for him. And think of the possibilities. He could smash the windows and black Lampy’s eyes and create much devastation. Let ’s start right now.”

“That ’s good, but I shall have to pass it up. It would unsettle poor Lampy’s mind. I ’ll tell you why in a minute. Whoop-La, speak!”

Gordon did not respond at once. He shifted his position and cleared his throat ominously. His painted smile, curving upward in red grease-paint from the corners of his serious mouth, lent his long face the appearance of unwilling mirth as he asked, “Do you really intend to do something of this sort?”

A concerted affirmative answer came from the Raz-Dazians.

“I thought you were fooling, Landon,” he said. “I scarcely expected to find you leading anything so——”

“So piffingly adolescent?” smiled Landon.

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“Yes, or adolescently piffing, if you prefer it that way.” Whoop-La was plainly very much disgusted. “I thought we swore off on that form of stupidity some years ago.”

“But you must see, James,” replied Bugs, “that the opportunities in this case are rare and tempting. Do you admit that?”

“Yes, perhaps they are. It is a great chance to be funny.” Gordon subsided only when Westmore had used force upon him.

“Attention, company!” called Landon. “We have just time to agree upon a plan before you are needed upstairs. I’ll say for Gordon’s benefit that I felt just as he does when I was first asked to officiate in these rites. But as you were determined to do something, I wanted to see it done right. I still have some of the old sophomore blood left.”

This so irritated the lugubrious Court Jester, that he left the room, to the tinkling accompaniment of the bells with which his gayly striped clothes were adorned. Red Wallace said he had already “done his share,” and went out with Gordon to change costumes. He was to “double” as the Strolling Pedlar in the second act.

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“I ’m glad Gordon has gone,” said Landon. “We can talk more freely. First, I wanted to tell you about Lampy’s peculiarities. You know, I suppose, that some people consider him addled up here?” He tapped his forehead impressively. “That ’s because he was crazy once.”

“Really?” Squib exclaimed.

“Yes, really. It ’s a long story and I ’m not going to tell it. It happened years ago. A man disappeared very mysteriously and Lampy was accused of murder. The man had been seen entering Lampy’s room, but they couldn’t prove anything on him. The case was dropped. Poor Lampy went completely woozy for a year or so. That ’s what they say, but it may be only a fake. You know he does mighty funny things—stays up all night sometimes, doing all sorts of strange stunts—can’t bear electric lights—uses a stinking old kerosene lamp or a candle. He’s dotty about the Middle Ages, and medieval documents, and chemistry, and so on. He manages to work up some kind of laboratory experiments in his room, they say.”

“I don’t think I care to associate with an intermittent maniac,” said Squib, frowning.

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“Nonsense.” Landon slapped him on the back. “Cheer up. I don’t believe half the stuff they tell about Lampy. He ’s only a nutty old goat. You said so yourself. He ’s harmless, and no mistake. I simply told you so that you would not remind him of his old trouble. You might bring it back, you know. There goes the bell, and I have to study tonight; so listen to my scheme.”

Landon mounted a chair and stated his plans hurriedly:

“Now, there is not a chance on earth to do anything tonight. Lampy’s in Evanston addressing a culture club. Tomorrow ’s the time, after the show. Lampy will be at home then, with his candle going full tilt.”

“Red said he was going to be away tomorrow night,” Squib broke in.

“Red was mistaken. He meant the night after that. Now, as to the competent and well-meant suggestions to which we have just listened, I think our friend Squiblet’s contribution is the most pertinent. Squib started the thing, and it would n’t be fair to deprive him of the pleasure of managing it, in part, at least. It is only right that he should act as the devil

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ex machina. Therefore we 'll do the repentance act. Squib can work out his own line of talk, and the rest of us can be the loving relatives, as our friend Westmore suggests. I 'll arrange for a grand transformation scene, so that it will end the right way and in harmony with the touching relations that should exist between the faculty and the students."

"Last act!" shrieked an excited person outside.

"Wait a second. The opening chorus is n't over yet. Fix it up so that you can all slip out the stage-door with your rigs on. Everybody but Squib wear ordinary wraps over his costume. I 'll find myself some kind of clothes. The procession will form back of Mandel and proceed across country to Ryerson, thence to Sleepy Hollow by way of the uncharted wilds of the South Quadrangles and thence to North Hall. Squib will tap five times on Lampy's door. Five taps is Lampy's private signal—sometimes he does n't open up. Got it straight? Then run along. Somebody's calling you, Squib."

The second act of Raz-Daz, set in a forest glade by the ingenious if obvious transforma-

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tion of the castle buttresses into primeval green, proceeded to a rousing climax with a vim and snap that surprised Wakefield, the coach. The honeysuckle ballet, having cast off its airy garb for the russet habiliments of the wood-nymph chorus, hopped valiantly about like amiable toads with a compelling desire to please. The Count di Bummi and Aunt Lucretia and even the Strolling Pedlar seemed fired with the same ambition. But most of all, Wakefield called down his official blessing upon Yvonne de la Plaisance and Otto von Pickleschnitzel, who rose to delirious heights of comedy in their big scene. Their interpolated burlesque, announced as "The Repentant Co-ed," received much applause from the critical audience of alumni in front.

An hour later, the conspirators finished a special session in Landon's room. Squib was not present.

"Red, you did it fine," Landon was saying. "You are without a doubt the most accomplished liar I ever have met. That telephone incident was beautiful."

"You 're some gay deceiver yourself, Bugs," returned Red. "For instance, the bloody mur-

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der part. It was mighty fine of Lampy to come in on the thing, was n't it? He 's a bird."

"And now, if we can only cause Squib to throw a few fits, I shall feel that we have not lived in vain," added Westmore.

"Amen," said Petey Strong and Al Taylor.

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III

“Frozen feet,” said Squib, with conviction.

“That ’s a bum hunch,” objected Von Pickelschnitzel Taylor. “Bugs never gets that complaint.”

The Raz-Dazians conversed in low tones on the steps of Haskell, whither they had come by circuitous paths quite different from the formal line of march arranged by Landon. They had been obliged to sprint past several astonished groups to avoid being recognized. Landon might have managed more gracefully; but that artful and gifted senior was, as Red Wallace had explained, unable personally to conduct the party. It was his desertion at the eleventh hour that had called forth Squib’s unkind remark about his feet.

Red, from a picturesque eminence on the top step, joined in defending Landon. “Do you suppose it ’s his fault that his aunt has the mumps, or whatever it is?” he argued. “I tell you I was there when he got the message. It read to ‘come at once. Aunt Lizzie is sinking.’ Bugs threw some things into a suit-case

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and ran for a train. Said Aunt Lizzie was an awfully nice old thing and that he could n't allow her to sink in solitude. He 's going to try to jolly up her last moments. He took a deck of cards along. Aunt Lizzie is foolish about pitch. And he said he could n't possibly get back before Tuesday—too long to postpone our revenge."

"Sounds fairly reasonable, but I wish Aunt Lizzie could have stuck for another night," complained Squib. "I thought he had cold feet sure. I saw him talking to Gloomy Gordon this morning; and Gordon, you know, wanted him to give up the fun. They were laughing when I saw them."

"What of it? The fact remains that he 's gone and——"

"Let 's stay here all night and have a debate about it," suggested Petey Strong, idly dusting his trousers with a yellow silk handkerchief, which had added, he thought, quite a foreign touch to his Count di Bummi costume. "Say, did you fellows see that bouquet of onions and radishes that Gordon got after the first act? He ate part of it and put the rest in Wakefield's overcoat."

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“Sh—h—!” Squib emphasized his warning with a kick at Petey’s ribs. “Not so loud. Who is that fellow looking at us over there by Law?”

“The watchman. Probably thinks we’re going to break in here and steal the mummies,” ventured Petey, shouting again. “Hey, over there! We’re not going to steal your old mummies.”

The watchman, who was wise, moved on. He knew that kind—“sassy little fellers but good-natured anyways, and that ’s somethin’.”

“What time is it, Petey?” Squib asked.

“Almost the ghostly hour of twelve.”

“We’re due then. Come on. Anybody want to quit?”

Evidently nobody did. The loyal Raz-Dazians, transferring their allegiance from the absent Bugs to Squib, scrambled to their feet and saluted.

“Everybody remember his lines?”

“Yes,” together.

“You’re going to begin as soon as I finish my speech, Al?”

“Of course. I’m your father. Who would have a better right?”

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“Are n’t you going to introduce us? I insist upon that,” said Lucretia.

“Of course I ’ll introduce you,” Squib promised. “Professor Lampsen, my mother; Professor Lampsen, my father; my brothers, ‘prof’—like that. And I think I ’d better introduce myself, too—plain Miss de la Plaisance. Come on, now, and no racket.”

The “Raz-Daz” conspirators skirted Haskell, silent and shadowy, and cut across the Quadrangle toward the dimly lighted door of North Hall. And it is very probable that no stranger procession ever approached that virtuous portal.

Acting on Landon’s advice, the plotters had made valiant efforts to “disguise themselves as human beings.” Yvonne de la Plaisance’s brilliant red evening gown was draped with a rich purple table-spread, smuggled out of the property-man’s stronghold. Lucretia Nearly had rebelled on the plea of artistic temperament. “I am supposed to be your mother, so I ’ll do as I please,” Westmore had said. “Besides, you can’t subdue this green-and-yellow atrocity.”

Count di Bummi and the Strolling Pedlar,

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as the small brothers of Yvonne, had failed in their efforts to supply their characterizations with the conventional juvenile make-up. Petey, in a moment of wildness, had snatched up an infant's hat somewhat resembling a fat pancake, and after he had escaped through the stage-door, had been unable to find another. Red had erred in the opposite direction. He was burdened to the ears with a brown derby of venerable and disreputable appearance and immoderate size. Otto von Pickleschnitzel had squeezed himself, pads and all, into an overcoat. He was the irate father, and he was quite certain that his checkered suit was not sufficiently awe-inspiring for the part. He wore a silk tile over his wig; he thought irate fathers usually wore silk tiles. And he had deepened the red on his cheeks; he thought they usually had very red faces, too—mottled, if possible.

They climbed the stairs cautiously. "Remember, if we meet any one, heads down and collars up," whispered Squib, sweeping along in advance. His loyal adherents embraced in silent joy. They found Lampy's room on the fourth floor by the dim glow that came through

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the transom. Squib tapped on the door five times, as Landon had suggested.

“Come in.” It was Professor Lampsen’s peculiar, squeaky voice, familiar from his occasional lectures at ten-thirty.

Squib pushed open the door and his followers crowded into the room after him.

“I shall be out very soon,” came the squeaky voice from the little wardrobe at one side of the small room, with a sound as of clumsy fumbling among heavy books.

The only light in the room flickered from a short yellow candle on the table in the farther corner. So he did use a candle, after all! Probably did the other batty stunts they told about him, too! It was so dark and gloomy that they could not clearly make out the furnishings of the room, except a small bed, heaps of unbound magazines and bulky volumes piled about the floor, the table, and against one wall a queer object that might have been intended as a rustic bench. They were not certain of this; so they remained standing. They could hardly see one another’s faces. This was fine! There could be no embarrassing identifications in this light.

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“Pray, pardon this execrable light, gentlemen. My eyes are so abominably weak.”

The owner of the voice had entered silently from the curtained wardrobe. He looked more like a libelous caricature of a college professor than a member of the faculty. The tip of his nose, a straight mouth and a pale jaw showed beneath an enormous green eye-shade, which, in turn, was surmounted by a black skull-cap, pulled well down on the forehead. His black frock coat of ancient cut was shiny with much nervous rubbing on smooth-backed chairs, and his ill-fitting trousers bore the marks of long and faithful service. He certainly was a joke.

“Why,” and he raised one arm in token of surprise—“why, there are ladies present.” Evidently he was accustomed to the feeble glare of the candle, for he was quick to distinguish the costumes of his visitors, thought Squib. He seemed disconcerted. This was probably the first time that “feminine” guests had ever penetrated his sanctuary. No wonder he was fussed.

Squib was fussed, too, so much that he forgot to introduce himself and family. He walked

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over to the strange, gaunt figure and began his speech.

“Professor Lampsen, ’t is I,” he declaimed in quivering, high-pitched tones. Also, he gesticulated. “’T is I, but, oh, have pity. I am only a poor creature with the dope habit and the St. Vitus dance. I——”

“I beg your pardon, young woman,” the professor croaked. “Kindly repeat. I am so abominably deaf.”

Squib shouted in the professor’s ear: “I say I am only a poor dope fiend and I have the rickets—the kicking-rickets. I hope the old door-post heard that.”

“How terrible,” murmured the professor. “Yes, I heard you.”

Squib shouted again. He intended to see it through, even if Lampy did not seem responsive.

“I may have acted queerly yesterday, but I assure you that I was not myself at that time. Oh, sir, do not fire me. It would break my mamma’s heart.”

Squib was supposed to sniffle in his handkerchief at this juncture, but he could n’t find the

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handkerchief. So he used the purple table-spread, and continued:

“Oh, sir, have mercy.” This was the signal for the family to sink to its knees. “Oh, kind sir, behold my dear parents and my innocent little brothers.”

The professor turned about in time to witness an astounding exhibition of family grief. Lucretia was standing on her head; the irate father, thumbs at ears and fingers wriggling, was indulging in unflattering facial contortions; the brothers were fencing gleefully with two of Lampy’s brass-headed walking-sticks.

“Your misfortune is inherited, I presume,” said the professor, glancing again at the stricken family.

The irate father took offense. “Sir, how dare you insult my daughter?” he thundered, and then he remembered to puff. He thought irate fathers ought to puff, too. “How dare you”—puff—“insult my daughter”—puff, puff. “I have a notion”—puff—“to slap you”—puff—“yes, to s—s—slap you—but I’m too tired. You slap him, mother.”

“Slap him yourself,” retorted Lucretia,

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whose hat now hung rakishly over one ear. "I am old and feeble. You know very well I am. Yes, professor, she is my child. I hate to admit it, but she is."

"And we, sir," sang Petey Strong and Westmore in an empty monotone, "are Miss de la Plaisance's little brothers. Spare her, shady though she be."

Squib thought his friends must have taken leave of their senses. This was not much like the program he had so carefully prepared. But Lampy's chilling lack of interest in his visitors was worse. The professor just stood and twirled his thumbs. Squib attempted to enliven the occasion by performing a daring *pas seul*. The exhibition moved the professor to inquire, politely, whether they cared to have seats.

"Pardon my lack of courtesy," he said. "I am so abominably absent-minded. Sit here, please."

He waved his guests toward the strange bench pushed up against the wall opposite the bed. The thing was made of five roughly fashioned chairs, joined with heavy timbers extending across the narrow backs and under the scooped-

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out seats; evidently it was of Lampy's own manufacture—another example of his pottering in many fields, Squib reflected. The professor insisted upon Squib's occupying the seat nearest the table.

“I picked this up in Baluchistan,” he explained in a tone he might have used in talking art with a crony over the Commons faculty table. “Have you ever been in Baluchistan? It is a ve—ry interesting place—very. Do you wish to see how this works? It is ve—ry interesting—very.”

With four swift motions of his long arms, the host drew four heavy leather straps from the back and bottom of Squib's chair, slipped them across, and buckled them. Squib was trussed and helpless, and rather startled, his neck, body and legs lashed securely to the chair.

“Do you also wish to sit in the true Baluchistanese manner?” The professor turned to the others. To Squib's surprise, the rest of the family expressed great eagerness to be confined in this truly novel and heathen style. So they, too, were bound—very expeditiously, Squib thought. Squib's neck-strap was so tight that

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he was unable to watch the process, which took only a few seconds.

“Yes, it is very interesting, Professor Lampsen,” Squib tremulously remarked when the demonstrator of Baluchistanese manners and customs gave no sign of removing the thongs. “It is quite odd; but I think the neck strap is a trifle tight.”

“Yes, indeed,” said the professor. “How felicitous! It is meant to be tight. The head comes off more easily that way.”

“W—what?”

“The head must be held very erect, my dear young lady.” There was a queer note in Lampy’s voice now. “It is less painful in the end. Decapitation, to be artistic, should be scientific. The two fields of human endeavor merge into one. Consider that point, I beg of you. It is so abominably simple.” He walked slowly to the table and pillowed his head in his arms as if deeply grieved over this absurdity.

Squib laughed. It was quite a joke. He hadn’t credited Lampy with so much humor. But the laugh had a hollow sound. He twisted his head painfully, but could not see the faces of his friends. He wondered if they were

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frightened. As he squinted out of the tail of his eye, he gave a quick, shuddering jump, and jerked his head back into position. An electric shock, nerve-racking and blinding, had passed over him. He thought he heard Al and the others making strange sounds. Once again he tried to laugh, but another shock tingled sharply to his very toes and converted the attempt into a mere gurgle. Another jump. Really, it was a clever stunt—this fake execution. Only, it seemed a little creepy because of the hour and because Lampy was so silent and grim about it.

The strap was cutting into Squib's neck. "We surrender," he gasped. "We know you're on to us, Professor Lampsen." His voice quivered a little, even more than it had quivered a short time before, for a slightly different reason. And it was not falsetto now. His host turned around and smiled—a smile of vapid stupidity. There was not a sign of intelligence in that dropping jaw, those dead white lips.

"I say we surrender," Squib repeated weakly.

This had a most amazing effect. The professor sprang to his feet, snapped his teeth and

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reeled backward, beating his head with clenched fists and uttering frightful, guttural noises. He pointed a long, bony finger at Squib, who stared foolishly, transfixed with sudden horror.

“You—you,” he hissed, rushing up to that trembling youth and shaking his thin hands before his face. “My God! So you ’ve come out of the grave I sent you to.” He laughed more fiendishly than ever. “So you ’re after me again, Smith. We ’ll see. We ’ll see.” He finished in a ghastly, grating chuckle, and staggered to the table.

Squib, as the chief object of the maniac’s fury, felt an icy thrill down his spine. For there was no longer any doubt of the professor’s condition. He was mad—stark, staring mad. And Squib did not like to think of the probable cause of it all. He had heard gruesome tales of the recurrence of insanity—blood-curdling stories of the freak reactions of the brain to suddenly projected incidents of the past. The story of the forgotten murder came back to him like a nightmare. Well, he forgave Bugs Landon, whatever happened—Bugs, who should have known better than to allow this crime. A choking lump came into his throat.

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He would have liked to see the looks on the faces of the others, sitting alongside in their absurd clownish costumes. He tried to call for help. He could n't. Why did n't the others?

It was a time for action. Squib strained desperately at his straps, exhaling labored breath through set teeth. The straps seemed all the stronger. He tried to rattle the legs of the bench by violently wriggling his body. He might as well have attempted to lift himself by the hair. The legs of the Baluchistanese chair of death were nailed firmly to the floor.

“All pull together when I say three,” he managed to whisper to Al. “Ready now—one—two—”

Another paralyzing shock from the unseen battery silenced him. He relaxed, limp and weak.

The lunatic, leaning against the table, bared his teeth in a diabolical grin and chuckled again, that awful, rasping chuckle. It was worse than the raving laugh. He stood there and looked at Squib for a moment, and then, with a composure that was portentous and evil, he minced over to the sweating sophomore

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and forced open his mouth with a powerful dig of thumb and forefinger.

“I beg your pardon, but I am so abominably cautious,” he mumbled, as he slipped a wooden gag between Squib’s teeth. He tied the gag-strings in a double knot and dexterously adjusted a piece of cording about Squib’s neck, illustrating its effectiveness as a choker by several sharp tugs. Then he tottered into the wardrobe and returned with an armful of queer, jangling objects, which he dumped on the floor. He made the trip several times. Some of the objects were large and heavy. When he had thrown the last load upon the pile, he dropped down beside it and began to assort it in formal rows at the feet of the Raz-Dazians. It was a strange mess of rusty, red-stained scraps, but Squib knew well enough what it meant. It was a collection of medieval instruments of torture!

Squib had first seen the things when they were exhibited in one of the museums, and he remembered the realistic lecture on “The Inquisition” which had been given on that occasion. He did n’t imagine then that they might belong to Lampy. There they were. There was

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the thumbscrew, a wicked little vise of iron with sharp teeth that bit and wrenched the joints sickeningly; and the rack, a ladder and rope and windlass contrivance—they called it the “little horse”—that twisted the shoulders from their sockets, and crunched the bones, and tore away the ligaments and the muscles of the chest. A girl had fainted during the lecture. And there were the nail-studded “iron boots” that sank into the flesh of the legs and cracked the shins; and the spurs for mutilating the feet; and tongue-tearers; and fiendish little devices for pulling out the nails; and spiked leather collars that choked and strangled slowly and cruelly; and torches that burned the flesh to the bone; and executioners’ swords all spotted with the silent evidence of dungeon tragedies.

The yellow candle sputtered and flared, rocking the shadows on the walls. And Squib sat, painfully erect in his imported chair, scarcely breathing; gazing, fascinated, at the frightful rows of rusty, bloody relics, and at the creature sitting there beside them.

Suddenly the madman rose and wheeled about. A hideous, green, goggle-eyed mask covered his face. Through the gaping, white-

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rimmed mouth of it came terrible snarls and the sound of grinding teeth. The maniac stooped to the implements of torture and grabbed up a sword as he lurched dizzily toward his victims. He raised the weapon and brought it down again and again. At each blow there was a splintering of wood, a swaying of the bench of death, and a strange sound that was almost like a stifled laugh—then silence. Squib cringed.

The madman stopped in front of Squib, drew back a step, and raised the rusty blade.

What was that! Squib started violently. Some one was running up the stairs. Some one was coming! The steps scraped rapidly along the hall. The sword was poised. A hand was at the door.

There was a sudden crash of steel. Pitch darkness and the sound of a heavy fall. Squib closed his eyes. When he opened them, the electric chandelier was a dazzling sun. In its full glare stood Professor Ezekiel Swaybill Lampsen in immaculate evening dress, rubbing his hands and smiling cheerfully at Bugs Landon, who was ruefully brushing the dust from a shiny black frock coat of wretched

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size and cut. Four clowns with ridiculous, painted faces were loosening the straps of the torture-chair, and the gag.

“Brace up, Squib,” said Landon. “You’re still alive.”

Squib did not feel like bracing up. But he was a sophomore, and he did his best.

“Well,” he said tremulously, as he mopped his forehead with the purple table-spread, “I suppose you fellows really think you had me scared.”

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I

AS AN alumnus——” drawled Larned, surrendering his hat to the knock-kneed waiter and seating himself in the fourth chair at the square table, “as an alumnus—I ’m as hungry as a spotted giraffe.”

“As an alumnus,” suggested Norton, “you had better pound on wood or they ’ll take that pretty sheepskin thing away from you. You ’ve been working it to death for the last six hours. Has n’t he?” nodding across the table to Landon and Walters.

“Well,” insisted Larned, “as an alumnus, I can talk all I please. And as I said before, I ’m so starved I could eat a fifty-cent meal, including a pint of colored vinegar.”

“Which is just what you are about to receive if I know the haunts of the table d’ hôte,” said Walters.

“Somebody told me this place was a wonder,” continued Larned. “If it is not, I ’m liable to commit murder,” and the big tackle

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glanced around with unsavage eyes. "Some joint for a French restaurant, is n't it?"

"Yes, it is n't," said Walters. "Quite continental—not."

The four new graduates surveyed the scene with deliberate interest, bestowing equal attention upon the mural embellishments and the after-theater crowd. For a rather remarkable taste had arrayed the yellow-tinted walls. The chief decorative effects were several red and green lithographic advertisements of oysters from Baltimore, a somber cut of "Clay's Farewell to the Senate," a very thin trotter, a smirking, pink-winged, somewhat corpulent lady scooping a dishpan of goldfish from a mirrored spring, and a "Baby Stuart" nailed in sweet infant helplessness above the mechanical piano, which was ripping out the "Miserere" in fast waltz time.

Back and forth among his guests moved the proprietor, a huge, fierce-whiskered man whose size ran largely to front. At the tables most of the late diners were volubly conversing; at one a group of musicians, gesticulating and palming; at another a woman feeding stringy bits of salad to a slightly soiled

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poodle and a very soiled child; at a third, five vaudeville girls who looked tired and blew cigarette smoke through their noses—one of the girls was reading doggedly from a torn paper-backed book, never lifting eye from page, forming each word with her lips and following to the next with a slow, inexorable finger. From the piano Leonora screamed right lustily, and Manrico, pent in his dungeon cell, answered in kind. The passing bell clanged fitfully on a tuneless bass note.

He of the interfering knees stopped bellowing orders through the swinging doors and approached. What would the gentlemen have? Was there, then, a choice? No? Very well. The gentlemen would permit him to serve the regular prison fare.

“Really, I ’m not wild about this place,” grumbled Larned, looking after the patient waiter. “I don’t think I care for it—as an alumnus.”

“Say, Ted,” advised Landon, “if you are so overwhelmed by your new handle, you ought to make a great speech tomorrow night. I presume you have it all written out.”

Larned wrinkled his brow. “I ’d rather be

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burned at the stake than make a speech; you know that, Bugs. And you're not going to shove the spouting act my way, thank you kindly."

"That's all right, too," said Landon. "I'm no speechifier myself, but we all have to talk—as alumni, you know. I tried to discourage the whole affair, but I couldn't do it. Did you see those invitations?"

The invitations had read: "The Four Pillars Of The Temple Are Leaving. Bugs Landon, Ted Larned, Norry Norton, Pop Walters. Educated Oratory. Friday Night." The brief notice would bring together a whole throng of Rhos, from grads. to freshmen—the ones they had known best in college, and therefore liked most. A number of the fellows were staying in town and cutting summer vacations in order to be present. It was to be an important affair; it would be necessary, the fellows said, to do justice to the name that had stuck to the four of them for so long. It was from a half-sentimental regard for the feelings of the inseparables that they had been left to themselves on Convocation night; they probably would want to talk and talk, the Rhos said, and

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maybe weep on one another's shoulders, for they might not be together again for a long time. So Ted and Pop and Bugs and Norry had been told to go it alone for the last time, their friends supplying them with an itinerary that would have required a week to fulfill. And they had chosen only a theater and a bite to eat at the queer little French restaurant just below the loop.

The four Pillars certainly were not so cavalier as usual. Big, generous, bushy-headed Ted Larned had forced his ringing laugh all evening, and white-topped Pop Walters, the inveterate humorist of the steely eyes and the straight lips, had not made nearly so many of those remarks of his—remarks that invariably were considered cynical by people who did not know him. Landon's gravity was not especially odd; he always looked more or less that way. And Norton, hardy, tough-skinned Norry Norton, made no secret of his belief that the whole thing was a "damned shame."

"Well," said Larned, after due deliberation, "I'll tell you how I feel about it. It may sound soft, but I'm dead anxious to leave a sort of

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lasting impression with the younger fellows. You know what I mean. And——”

“You want to be remembered for your kind deeds and your fine, manly character which only the angels know?” jeered Walters.

“Yes, that ’s about right. I don’t fancy going down in history as the two-hundred-pound tackle and all that. I’d rather be stacked up higher. I suppose it ’s kind of silly of me, is n’t it? How do you feel?”

The others felt much the same way. They did not think it soft.

“But what has that got to do with the speech?” demanded Walters.

“I was wondering why we could n’t take this opportunity to tell just where we stand on some things,” said the football man. “I don’t intend to put in a bid for a statue, but I believe I shall deliver a little sermon, now that I come to think of it.”

“Fine,” said Landon. “I don’t think it would hurt either you or the youngsters. I’ll do the same thing. We need n’t be afraid of overdoing it. It will be good for us, and it may correct a few little misapprehensions that some of the crowd hold. We have been a little—

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well—easy-going in our day, or it may have struck some people that way. Why, I should n't wonder if some of the freshmen regard us as the original 'college scrape' boys."

"Right, Bugs," put in Norton. "That freshman Grant asked me only the other day if he might not 'go along sometime,' as if he had been begging a ticket to a private exhibition of old Beelzebub. He's already beginning to search for adventure. And then those freshmen of ours have been getting into too many scrapes lately. They look innocent and say they've been terribly misjudged every time they get caught."

"The appearance of evil!" Walters exclaimed. "My, oh my, what a grand old loophole it is. Fact is, though, you can't always avoid it."

"Oh, I guess you can keep out of trouble in college if you want to," remarked Larned, whose straightforward code comprehended neither mysteries nor complications.

"Coming back to the point," breezed Landon, "we might say a few things about studying once in a while, but I guess they know that by this time. It will not be necessary to discuss

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their other duties to Chicago—we 've done that already. Just 'heart to heart,' as the preacher said." With his elbows on the table, Bugs finished: "It does seem strange to see all those long-legged little fellows doing stunts in college. Seems as if they get younger and younger every year."

"Well, they don't," said Walters. "The average age of freshmen is increasing along with their sophistication, so cheer up. Furthermore the 'little fellows' would be awfully bored if they thought they were being analyzed by a bunch of six-hour grads. The trouble with us is that we can't see the babies in true focus—like the coat that Ted wore every day while he was growing so, without noticing how small it was getting. Remember how Williams asked you if you were hiring out as the human stretcher, Ted? Let 'em grow up in their own way, and don't force a lot of hothouse views on them. Personally, I believe the best ones will come out all right—I and other famous pedagogical experts. The faculty seem to hold the same cold-blooded opinion."

"It's wrong, anyway," objected Norton.

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“What do people go to college for if not to be helped?”

“To help themselves.”

“Platitude number ninety-seven in the ‘Educators’ Ready Handbook,’ ” said Norry.

“Well,” asked Larned, “are we going to preach at the party?”

“We are,” Landon assured him.

“We are,” said Norry, fervently.

“Sure, I ’ll assist in the good work,” promised Walters. “It ’s all moonshine, but we ’ll have plenty of time to blush about it after we get out into the and so forth. And I ’ll guarantee to draw more tears than the rest of you combined. It is agreed then that we are to depart in a halo of ethical glory. We are to wind up our education as the four bright, unspotted lights, the salvation screamers, worthy examples, and so on. Right. Now, let’s eat some of this green stuff.”

The Pillars felt quite serious about the farewell smoker and their part in it—even Walters, who dreaded what he called “sloppiness,” and made fun of his finer feelings—because it intimately concerned many friends of whom they were fond. They might have sat there all

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night discussing their own moral solidity but for the arrival of the salad and the performance of a startling divertisement by one of the café patrons. This person, aroused by the operatic selection, stuck his round, tipsy face into the squat, paper-trimmed stove, and began to sing in a loud, doleful tone. He was pulled out by the coat and assisted to his table, where he was received by his party with admiring joy. The Pillars smiled and began to "remember" things, for they could feel the time slipping past.

"Remember the time——?" Clear back to freshman year went Norry and Ted and Bugs and Pop—back to the very first Quarter, when they all lived together in Snell and wore one another's clothes and smoked one another's pipes and woke one another with violent methods, including cold water and hot-foot. They remembered the time they discovered, while dressing for a grand freshman function, that the common wardrobe contained but three dress suits, and how Bugs was left out on the draw and sat around until early morning in the pomp of pearl studs and bath-robe, waiting in vain for Pop, who had promised to return and

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give up the clothes in time for Bugs to get a dance or two; and the time they had Frank Beam arrested for "holding up" the fellows on dark nights, and how Beam proceeded to engage expensive counsel, telegraph his parents, pack his trunk and otherwise excite himself. They recalled even the time they trudged three miles through the snow to return some signs they had stolen, Pop having declared that Benjamin Franklin or Thomas Jefferson had once done the same thing with a pig or a loaf of bread, he could n't say which.

"Remember old Sleeping Samuel?" mused Walters, and Samuel was promptly remembered; poor, tired old Samuel, whose useless efforts to secure sufficient rest resulted in his going about in a red-lidded daze most of the time, saying little except to reiterate that he was "almost even with the clock now," and the elaborately flimsy excuses he evolved in support of his aversion for class lectures; how he would say that there was one day in the week when his nine-thirty did not meet and he feared that was the day, and if it *was*, there would be no earthly sense in going to it, and if it was *not*, he would be late anyway and get marked absent. Then

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he would wink his left eye—no, his right eye—as if he half realized how absurd he was, and flop over and go to sleep again in that everlasting striped brown quilt. And there was Heinrich, in sophomore year, who quoted proverbs, which the fellows would reverse or twist into whimsical nonsense, much to his bewilderment; it always took Heiny a second or two to remember whether he had said the right thing. And then came Alfred, called The Wise, who pronounced everything correctly and quoted the classics and said, “I fear you have neglected your Hegel,” and never could understand why the fellows laughed.

“Do you suppose the fellows will all be back next year—all but us?” asked Norton, fumbling with a small coffee-cup.

“Don’t know,” said Landon. “Pour the brandy over the sugar and light it. No thanks—I don’t like cognac.”

The Pillars talked devoutly of the glories of their early days in college; of the fine flower that flourished on the campus in sophomore year, for instance, when the most wonderful persons loafed in front of Cobb and spoke at

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mass meetings in Kent and Mandel, and performed amazingly on the gridiron.

Then came the familiar incidents of Class Day: the senior play and the senior frolic in Sleepy Hollow with the sack and pillow-races and the baseball game. Walters had fanned three times in the game and only failed to make more errors because of his limited number of chances. Afterward there had been the class luncheon, and a lecture on "Independence" by a Doctor of Laws; and the bench exercises, with numerous inaudible addresses by scared young men and women, and some fine jokes which most of the parents applauded, although they did not understand. Katherine Snowden had been quite successful with her Class History speech, referring proudly to the vast amount of learning absorbed by "this remarkable class." One of the senior girls said that Kitty should be an authority on the point, since she owed her degree to a solid week of cramming such as Foster Hall never before had witnessed. She had kept up bravely on a diet of chocolate and crackers. And how everybody had strutted and looked pleased at Convocation! The Pillars

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could not recall why they had felt so exalted as they marched into Mandel.

“I feel kind of gloomy,” Larned remarked. “Let’s talk show. I thought I caught a new joke by the comedian. Did you get it? The mother-in-law was coming to visit the family, and the wife was glad and the husband was not. Clever little thing, eh?”

“I know a nice little story about a murder and suicide,” suggested Norton.

“Save it,” advised Landon.

“Remember, fellows, that this is not a funeral,” said Walters. “It is the bright flowering—grand opportunities—now about to enter more fully—awfully jolly old chap, that orator.”

Pop said it somewhat dismally, and the alumni fell silent. People were leaving the restaurant. The dirty poodle, attached to a leash, was pulling the soiled child toward the door. The intense young woman had closed her book and was winding a wrinkled veil about her neck. The proprietor turned down the lights on one side of the room.

“Let’s have a little decent fizz,” said Walters.

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The fizz was brought. It bubbled up merrily through the hollow stems. The rims of the glasses clicked softly, one against the other, and at each musical contact, two boys glanced swiftly across and into clear-gazing eyes. The alumni sipped, and looked down at the table a good deal.

After a while Larned pushed back his chair. It scraped harshly on the floor. Then Ted stood up, the whole two yards of him.

“Let ’s hike,” he said.

“Where?” asked Pop.

“Home. Let ’s all go out to the house—together—like we used to.”

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II

The Four Pillars of the Temple strolled toward the street-car with the satisfying knowledge that they had voluntarily celebrated a rather privileged occasion in an altogether decorous manner. They felt just a bit righteous over this fact, but that was because they were sincere. They were not hypocrites. Larned, leading the way through the unfamiliar district, observed that they had been mighty decent for Bachelors of Philosophy.

The narrow, cross-town street interested the Pillars. There were gaudy little restaurants, advertising a great variety of food at wonderfully low prices; and a shooting-gallery with a black-and-white menagerie scene in which rabbits and doves chased each other around a never-weary target-wheel to the nervous music that is peculiar to shooting-galleries; and "penny arcades" where fashionable young women, adorned with diamond earrings and toothpicks, sorted towers of coins, while dirty urchins cranked the disappointing picture-machines; and fruit stands where small men with bristling

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mustaches stood guard over pyramids of oranges and pails of sun-bleached, weather-beaten chocolates.

From the avenue of horrors, they emerged into the fringe of down-town State Street, where the lights were brighter and the people noisier.

“This is a fine place for you to be in, Ted,” taunted Walters.

“It ’s Whisky Row,” answered Larned. “I guess you children never have been here. I went through it once with a fellow who was investigating it for some society. I think he wanted me as an anti-bouncer. There ’s one slug down here who would make the finest full-back ever—regular human catapult.”

They walked slowly along the ugly street, peering curiously at the electric arches and signs of saloons sandwiched ironically between pawn shops and second-hand establishments. The contending beat of “music” came from each gleaming entrance, the shriek of an impudent phonograph clamoring from one, the despondent saw-saw of an orchestra from the next, the whole blending into a dissonance that was weird and depressing. Many people

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swarmed along the walks. Most of the people had queer faces.

“Kind of reeks, this place,” Norton remarked.

“Sure does,” said Walters. “By the way, look at the bout.”

Two men had begun to kick and curse each other, and the crowd was rushing to see the fun. The men were rolling and clawing in the street. One of them resembled an over-ripe strawberry, his yellow, stubbled beard pricking through a swollen red face; the other, almost any kind of decayed fruit or vegetable, for his facial color scheme was wholly indeterminate, but for a small spot of blood on his cheek, and his eyes swam sickeningly, and he had no eyebrows at all. A fat policeman broke through the crowd, separated the combatants, and led them, whimpering, to the corner. The policeman used his club to force his way, and Larned got a sharp tap on the shoulder.

“Look out, there,” Ted flashed. “Keep your stick to yourself.”

The officer turned an indignant gaze on the Pillars and muttered something as he proceeded to the corner with his captives.

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“Careful, Teddy,” warned Norton. “Don’t get us into a free-for-all with that giant egg—I should say, with that ellipsoid. He looks like a bad one.”

“I’d like to break his shell for him,” scowled Ted, leading the Pillars across the street toward the Wabash Avenue car.

The Four Pillars halted on the far corner to watch a most amazing procession of intoxicated persons, who appeared to be going home for the night. The tipsy ones strung past in a continuous file, like fantastic marchers in some burlesque ceremonial passing the reviewing stand at well-timed intervals. Some tried to walk erect and some made no attempts; some mumbled to themselves and some cursed weakly. One was a cripple, on crutches—it looked strange to see a one-legged man staggering that way.

“That’s pitiful,” commented Larned. “I would n’t mind doing something for them if I could. Got a notion to speak to one of them.”

“Sure—reform them,” said Pop. “That seems to be your specialty tonight.”

“Here’s the very boy,” laughed Ted, pointing to a chubby, crimson-faced old fellow who

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was staggering toward the corner with considerable difficulty. The old man seemed to be enjoying himself vastly. He rolled and swayed, and evidently derived much amusement from each lurching recovery. He would laugh gleefully and then slyly stop his mouth with a fat palm, leering absurdly at nothing. As he came even with the Pillars, he screwed up his face in a ludicrous effort to convey some message to the corner lamp-post.

“He ’s a good-natured old dog,” grinned Pop.

“Hey, there, old Dionysus,” Larned called, and the alumni sauntered to meet the frolicsome one.

“I think——” began Ted. But it is not certain what he thought, for at that instant a heavy hand descended upon him, and he whirled round to encounter the unfriendly gaze of the giant ellipsoid.

“What do youse want?” snorted the intruder.

“We ’re just looking. We don’t care to buy,” returned Walters. Larned did not feel like answering the gruff officer.

“I thought so,” said the ellipsoid. “Just

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lookin' is good—lookin' for somethin' easy. Up to your old tricks. Well, I 've been lookin' fer youse, I have."

"I beg your pardon?" smiled Pop, with a degree of politeness that was hardly necessary.

"Oh, you 're awful innocent, ain't youse?" sneered the arm of the law. "I suppose youse ain't the parties that 's been hangin' around here fer two weeks. I suppose you was n't tryin' to start a riot over there," directing a spatulate finger toward the scene of the drunken street fight. "If you ain't the same parties, how does it come that I 'm talkin' to youse here?" The ellipsoid expanded with conscious pride at what evidently considered an incontrovertible argument.

"You talk like a squirrel," blurted Norry. "We certainly have not been hanging around here for two weeks."

The officer saw fit to overlook this interruption. "What 'd youse yell at this guy fer?" he demanded of Larned. "You 're a smooth worker, you are. Did youse get what you was after?"

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Ted did not understand this, but the derelict was wiser.

“They cleaned me,” blubbered the tramp, turning out two bottomless pockets.

“Shut up,” yelled the policeman, rewarding the old man with a kick. “Who’s a doin’ this?” Turning on Walters, “I’ll learn youse, I will.”

“Pardon me again,” replied Pop in the icily deferential tone that always betrayed angry disturbances in the deepest wells of his wrath. “Forgive my mentioning it, but your use of the verb *to learn* is not permissible, even colloquially. You are extremely inelegant.”

This bit of humor seemed to displease the patrolman. He immediately told Pop what he thought of him. What he thought of Pop was very picturesque and ungrammatical. The Pillars, believing themselves insulted, returned language which should have reduced the ellipsoid to tears, but did not. At the very height of one of his extravagant compliments, Pop was suddenly seized by his light flannel trousers, whirled rudely through the air, and tossed upon the sidewalk beside the intoxicated old man. Then the Pillars heard a shrill whistle, and saw

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a small, wiry policeman running toward them. The new arrival stood guard while the ellipsoid muttered into a blue box on the corner.

“What ’s that fathead up to?” panted Norton. “Are we arrested?”

Larned and Landon were not certain. “I ’m sure I don’t know,” said Walters, inspecting his ruined trousers. “I think, however, that the giant egg is going to do something nice for us. He seems so pleasant and congenial.”

“Fergit it,” advised the ellipsoid.

“Are you joking with us, or what ’s up, anyway?” Norry asked the officer.

“They ’ll be here in a minute, now,” was the answer.

“Who?”

The arm of the law twirled his baton and refused to impart further information. Repulsed, the Pillars held a consultation. Vengeance upon the fat policeman at some future date was openly hinted. Walters ostentatiously took the numbers of the officers’ stars, whereat the officers smiled.

The inebriated marchers were now slowly parading back to the corner in morbid expectation of “the wagon.” Old Dionysus seemed

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almost convulsed at the sight. He waved a marvellously dirty handkerchief, and winked, and pounded his hands on his knees, so great was his mirth. Only when he saw the patrol-wagon racing toward him, did he desist. Then, on general principles, he retired rapidly in the direction of the nearest alley.

The patrol-wagon backed to the curb, the sergeant and his assistant jumped down and whisked the Pillars into the dim body of the vehicle, held a mysterious conference with the ellipsoid, jumped back in, slammed the door, and told the driver to "let 'er go," which the driver did. The "arrests" did not enjoy the ride. Landon maintained a deadly silence, which would have been dignified but for the rolling, jolting motion of the patrol. Larned's emotions verged on disbelief as he vainly endeavored to discover some attractive quality in his captors, some vulnerable point at which sympathetic humor might be expended to advantage. Norton raged and sputtered. Walters was terribly calm and collected and flippant and pale. He even managed to laugh once or twice. With an exaggerated gesture that proved how self-possessed he was, he drew out his sil-

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ver cigarette-case, selected a monogrammed cigarette, lighted it, and puffed a mouthful of perfumed smoke.

“Douse that thing,” ordered the sergeant.

Pop smoked on.

“Douse that, young feller.”

Pop glanced at the officer with the slightest hint of aggrieved surprise, as one whose eye instinctively lights upon and flickers instantly away from the person who audibly relishes his soup. He really did not feel called upon to obey this boor. So the rude patrolman “doused it” himself and ground the little white stick under his heel.

“I ’d as lief see a son of mine in the grave as smokin’ one of them coffin nails,” he confided to the officer across the aisle.

“I ’d rather be cremated than be a distant relative of yours,” said Pop, carefully picking out another nail for his coffin and lighting it. Whereupon the policeman used sterner means than mere talk. “Pop’s fillings rattled,” said Norry, afterward. The rebuke had a quelling effect on the passengers. The jolting wheels finally stopped, and the descent was effected. The alumni caught a glimpse of a forbidding

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brick building and a tall depot-tower with a clock in it as they were led past a receiving line of policemen and down some steps into a dark, narrow areaway. They stopped before a large door, which opened to a barred gate that swung open.

The reception committee led the new guests into a long cement-floored room which gave the impression of many rows of iron doors and much alcohol and many ugly faces. They brought up before a desk, behind which sat a functionary who seemed to be tired of living, and probably was.

"Here they are," said the sergeant. "They 've been a bothering Mulligan fer a week and Murphy finally got 'em. They 've been raisin' hell on that corner fer a long time."

Larned would have liked to meet Mulligan and Murphy.

The lockup-keeper was already proffering small printed forms.

"Sign up," said he; "name, age, where was you born, married or single."

Landon registered first, rejecting a suggestion that he use another name. The policeman looked at the signature.

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“Now, that you know who his father is, perhaps you ’d better stop this funny business,” said Norton.

“Fergit it,” said the sergeant. “We had a foreign noble in here half an hour ago and the son of a U. S. president before him. Makes no difference. Sign up, you.”

Norton and Larned complied. Walters tossed an engraved visiting card on the desk, declaring himself incapable of reading or writing. The officer said he would see about that later, adding, “Mulligan ’ll be glad to see ’em.”

“Mulligan won’t,” replied Larned. “Because we never set foot on that corner before. You ’ve got us dead wrong, officer. We were simply going out to the University, where we came from.”

“Maybe you was and maybe you was n’t,” was the stern rejoinder. “You collegers think you can put us on the blink like a lot of village constables, but you can’t. We haint so green.”

“Of course,” said Walters, “we do not intend to remain here. What are the little preliminaries?” Pop reached for his purse, as

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if prepared to pacify the law with a handsome tip.

“Two hundred apiece, bail. Who do you want notified?” said the lockup-keeper.

“Notify the mayor—notify the whole town,” Walters flared. “We ’d like to get it in the paper—on the front page.”

“Shut up. We ’ve got to be bailed out, you fool,” said Larned. To the patient official, “Call up Hyde Park double-naught and ask Taylor to come here. T-a-y-l-o-r—Taylor. Yes, he owns real estate in town. Ask him to bring his large car and tell him to stay mum about it.”

“Do you think Al will keep it dark?” asked Landon.

“If he does not,” said Ted, feelingly, “I ’ll kill him alive. See any antique chairs around here?”

The lockup-keeper had other arrangements in mind. He silently beckoned the Pillars toward the disorderly row. Pop’s previous flow of personalities may have had something to do with the gloomy person’s choice of his new quarters. He was pushed into an ill-smelling cell that was already more than two-thirds filled. He stood close up against the iron door, while

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Norry and Ted and Bugs were ushered into the next cell, which they were permitted to occupy alone.

“Cheer up, kid,” said a cheerful and chinless young man, who seemed to be a sort of bell-hop. “You haint an American citizen till you’ve been pinched onct.”

The incarcerating of the clean, flanneled youths was greeted by the other prisoners with jibes and jeers. Pop’s cell was most unpleasant. He was sure it was insanitary, if not actually pestilential. His fellow-guests shoved and elbowed him and made remarks about his clothes. An odorous vagrant clung to his arm, earnestly desiring a “chaw” and a quarter. When these articles were not supplied him, he directed his importunities to the next apartment.

“Have n’t got any. I don’t chaw,” said Ted.

“What are you in fer, pard?” queried the vagrant.

Walters answered for Larned. “He’s just here to influence the prisoners,” he said, smiling easily at Ted. “He’s being an example. He is full of kind deeds and has character and is very superior. He’s also a professional

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orator, getting material for a speech for tomorrow night—to-night, I mean. Wants to go down in history as one of the late martyrs.”

“That ’s an excruciating joke, Pop,” said Larned. “It ’s really side-splitting.”

“Of course, I admit that it is not funny,” returned Pop; “it is tragic. By the way, Ted, I don’t believe many of the freshmen ever have been pinched. You can warn them about it. Now, looking at you through the bars, I should say——”

“Cut the dude talk,” snarled a peevish prisoner.

The entrance of more “arrests” and the consequent shifts and crowding made further communication between the two cells impossible. Walters fell back upon the conversational gifts of the vagrant, who was whining for tobacco, and some others, whose proficiency in the vernacular was at once astonishing and bewildering. But the smell of the whisky and stale things was very offensive, and Pop’s head ached. He no longer felt flippant. It was much the same in the adjoining cell. It seemed hours before relief came in the person of the lockup-man, who called out the names of the Pillars

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and released them through stinky openings of the iron gates.

Al Taylor was waiting at a barred door at the foot of a winding flight of steps. He was quite gay. He took his elder brothers upstairs and introduced them to the desk-sergeant. Something was said about "nine o'clock sure."

"I 'll see that they get here," Al promised. "I hold myself responsible for their actions."

"Al, if you ever tell this, I 'll strangle you," said Larned, as they left the desk.

"Oh, no, you won't," answered Al. "For if you did, there would n't be any one to bail you out. Come on."

The Pillars drew long breaths of morning air as they passed out of the station door, and then they drew several shorter ones, because they were a little dazed. For they saw three large motors lined up before them. And in the motors were about twenty boys in various stages of noisy delight. The faces of Mansfield Garrett Tompkins and Phil Jennings and Petey Strong and Red Wallace were bright in the light of the street lamp. Little Jimmy Grant was leaning over the side of one of the cars, too tired to join in the racket.

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“This is a surprise for you,” announced Al, waving an arm toward the Rho chapter.

The seniors said very little.

“It must have been quite a job to get all those children down here,” Walters remarked.

“Yes, you bet it was,” agreed Al. “Some of ’em did n’t want to come, but I thought it would be a good lesson. Now they know where we keep our criminal classes. Pile in.”

The Four Pillars of the Temple finally were seated after they had succeeded in quieting the Rhos, who fought for the honor of riding with “jail-birds.”

Larned sat in the soft back seat of Taylor’s car with Jimmy Grant on his lap.

“Home, James,” he ordered, as Al turned on the speed.

“When ’s the trial coming off?” yelled Red Wallace.

“Nine o’clock,” said Taylor.

Larned grunted.

“Nine o’clock,” murmured Jimmy Grant, who had been temporarily roused from his stupor. “Gee, that ’s awful early. Will you have to be a witness or something, Ted?”

“Yes, I suppose so.”

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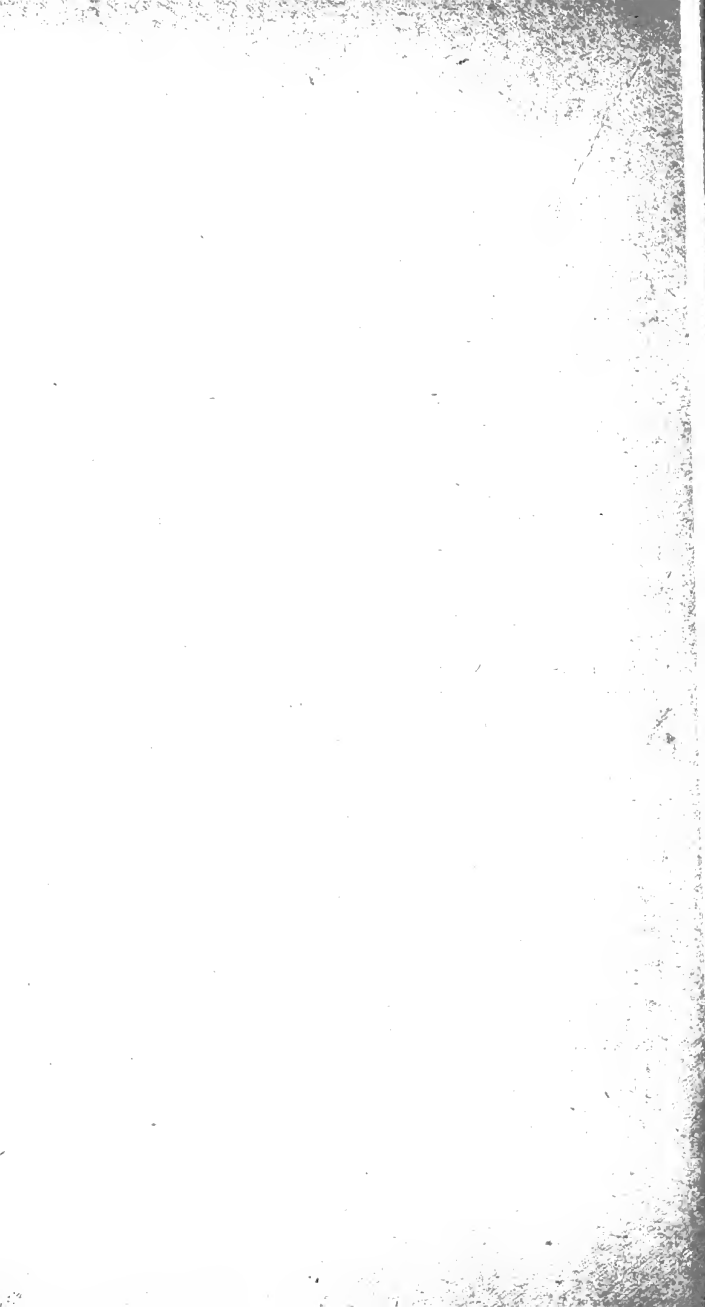
“Well, you ’ll just have time to get back to the party,” the freshman faltered drowsily. “You know, you are to make a speech.”

“Yes, I know—as an alumnus—but never mind about that, Jimmy. I ’ll make it very short.”

“Don’t you worry about this—this scrape, Ted,” sighed Jimmy. “The fellows will forget it. We all—make—mistakes—and——”

The freshman’s head drooped lower, for he was very weary indeed. He had been ruthlessly tumbled out of bed, and somebody had jerked him into his clothes and buttoned him up all crosswise and dragged him to the automobile. He had slept most of the way down town and his eyes felt blinky and he was not enjoying himself at all. Larned smiled down at the little fellow as the car whirred into an open, glittering stretch of boulevard. Then he lifted Jimmy’s aching body and settled it more comfortably in his lap and hugged the tired head against his big shoulder.

“Go to sleep, youngster,” he said. “Go on back to sleep.”



INCLUDING THE DOCTORATE

STEPHEN ANSLEY came down the steps of the Psychological Laboratory in a comfortable state of mind. He gave himself over, not without a mild consciousness of self-indulgence, to the enjoyment of a little swarm of pleasurable stimuli so marked and characteristic that they might just have escaped from the glass case where absurdly young Psych. 1 students may imagine they are kept with the funny papier-mâché cerebrum and the Brobdingnagian eye and ear models. Such nonsense would not have occurred to Stephen, who was twenty-nine and almost a Ph.D.—a Ph.D. with a *summa*, perhaps. For he had done a fine piece of work. He had finished a set of his research experiments a few minutes before, and his doctor's thesis would appear in the great scientific journal that tells about that kind of extraordinary and unapproachable achievements. It was enough to make anybody draw full, deep breaths and feel strong; anybody, of course, who goes in for those things.

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He did not stop to leave his green book-bag at his room in Hitchcock across the street, where the early lights and hurrying figures proclaimed the hasty dinner preparations of the dormitory men; he was going to dine at his fraternity house instead of at the Commons. He wanted to see the Rho freshman pledges and shake hands with the whole crowd. It always cheered him up. The pledges were young and happy and attractive—like Helen Barry, for instance, Stephen reflected.

Stephen had particularly noticed Miss Barry that morning, when he had supplied for Professor White in Psychology 1. He flushed a little as he remembered that he had glanced at her over his glasses rather more than was becoming in an instructor. He had at least a partial excuse, however, as he had read and admired her paper on "Association Centers" the night before. He had been surprised at the real merit—almost brilliance—of the exercise. She was pretty, too; much prettier than the other girls in Psych. 1. He hoped he would know her better. He meant to meet all the students and talk over the work—especially association centers. Stephen hardly ever allowed him-

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self to think right out like that about young women. He had n't time. Besides, as Red Wallace put it, he suffered from an acute case of the intellectual point of view. Red had no respect for learning.

The pleasurable stimuli did their work well. By the time Stephen reached the Midway, he was humming a tune from a worn-out comic opera, not in the least disturbed either by the antiquity or the unethical implication of the verse, boasting more or less musically that of him 't was said that he painted things red. Stephen had never accomplished more than a faint pink in his life. When he turned in at the house, he felt like an under-classman again. He wrenched his bad knee when he foolishly tried to take the steps four at a jump, and an over-healthy freshman, coming at a bound from behind, banged into him and pushed him through the half-open door. A great clatter of glass and silver greeted him inside. The Rhos were having their dinner.

And dinner at the Rho house that evening was no ordinary function. Everybody was expected and everybody came, down to the last of the eight freshmen, because it was the night

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before the annual initiation—even Mansfield Garrett Tompkins, still retaining his baptismal title through the failure of the sophomores to find a nickname that would adequately describe the case. Bugs Landon, the senior at the head of the upper-class table, arose and carried his soup to a lower place as the grad. shook hands with those nearest. At Stephen's right sat Professor Ford of the Sociology department, who had declined the position of honor. Professor Ford was a Rho, and faculty adviser to the Chicago chapter, in which capacity he called regularly once a year; he was an expert in social economy.

“Now, what do you think of this race conflict talk, Professor Ford?” Al Taylor was asking, as Bugs juggled his soup toward a vacant seat. Al prided himself on his conversational skill.

“Do you mean the track meet with Wisconsin next month, or the conference?” said Professor Ford. “I should say that both will be closely contested, though I understand we need distance men.” Bugs Landon, in the process of seating himself, further ruffled the feelings of Al by festooning a dripping string of vermi-

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celli over his left ear. Although Al was a junior, he had not heard that Professor Ford, who knew all about the methods of ameliorating conditions in crowded communities, had once worn a big blue sweater and a big white letter. But that was long before Al cared about sweaters and letters.

Red Wallace, who had been unusually quiet, came to the rescue.

“How are the little pink-noses, Stephen?” he inquired.

Red possessed only a languid interest in the white rats of the Psychological Laboratory, but he always greeted Stephen with apparent solicitude for their welfare. When Stephen said, “Doing finely,” Red would gravely observe that they must be getting quite fat by this time, must n’t they. The rest of the Rhos never worried about the rats, though Bugs Landon had once referred to them as “the white horses of Ansleysholm”—a subtlety which had been lost on Red, who thought conundrums in bad taste, anyway.

“The first set of trials in the labyrinth are completed,” said Stephen, solemnly. “I am encouraged to believe that I have proved my

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theory of orientation in the rodent." He talked that way because he was obliged to. Polysyllabic profundity was his natural means of expression.

"Fine business," cried Squib Morris.

Squib wished to hear more about that orientation; he was deeply interested in the Orient. He had an imitation Turkish rug in his room and a cozy corner with bamboo curtains and a red electric light. He smoked Amenhotep cigarettes and was addicted to such songs as "My Madagascar Beaut," "My Spanish Lulu," and "My Africano Kiddo." And wasn't he going to take Spanish and German both next year? So wouldn't Stephen please spout the whole story? Stephen would; he did.

Stephen's remarks doubtless were informative—they were tiresome enough. He apparently exhausted the possibilities of the white rat several times, only to go back and drag out more secrets about the creatures. You would have thought the little beasts were literally stuffed with facts instead of proper insides. He surcharged the dining room with the psychological-neurological-physiological vocab-

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ulary. Most of the Rhos felt sleepy. Professor Ford said, "I see, Ansley," once or twice, and Squib was so disappointed at the entire lack of oriental coloring that he made no comment whatever, which was strange. The freshmen, beyond words for once, continued their automatic eating. When Mansfield Garrett Tompkins pretended to stuff his mouth with his napkin, the rest of the freshmen did likewise. They thought Stephen might be joking after all, in which case they should be on the safe side.

"So it seems quite clear that in this experiment the olfactory sensations played no part in the relation of the rats to the labyrinth. One of the rats solved the maze in record time," Stephen finished.

"New sprinter. Great!" sniggered Mansfield Garrett, who, having failed dismally in his attempts to fashion the Leaning Tower of Pisa in crackers, found it absolutely imperative to say or do something at once. The freshman was squelched with a glance from Landon. Mansfield Garrett liked Bugs; so he looked silly and shuffled his feet on the floor and looked down at his dessert until he hit upon

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the brilliant plan of trying the Leaning Tower again.

“You said that similar experiments had been made with other animals in your department, did you not, Ansley?” Professor Ford asked.

“Yes, a comparative study was undertaken at the outset. It was found that the guinea pig, a rodent almost completely medullated at birth, in distinction to the absence of medullated fibers in the peripheral and central nervous systems of the rat, differs radically from the rat in its psychic life. Miss Hill carried out the guinea pig tests—Miss Charlotte Hill. Her thesis will be a most interesting and valuable document.”

That woke up Petey Strong, who had been a *Daily Maroon* reporter for a month, and knew a story. When fellow-freshmen asked Petey what he intended to make of himself, he would say: “Oh, a journalist, I guess. I ’m on *The Maroon* now.”

“Why didn’t you come through with that before, Stephen?” he wailed from the freshman table. “Just bring me her picture next time you get around. with the story of your life

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attached, and we 'll have a grand, glorious romance out of it on the front page."

Several of the Rhos were amused at this. Stephen and a girl! Stephen explained that he understood Miss Hill was engaged to a young Political Economy professor at another university—a Professor Dace, to be exact. Petey smiled resignedly. He had thought up such a good lead, in which "cloistered halls and ivied walls" should lend a sort of fancy touch to the story. He was still pitying himself when Landon pushed back his chair by way of a rising signal.

Professor Ford never stood on ceremony. He shook hands with everybody and left immediately for the West Side, where he was going to lecture on model tenements and social unrest before some people who lived in the other kind and were wickedly contented. Stephen had come to see the freshmen, and he talked to them as long as they would stand still, which was about a minute apiece. Then they scurried upstairs or out of doors in search of books or space to stretch their growing legs in, according to their varicus ideas of scholastic expediency. Groups of fellows sauntered to the

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window-seats and curtained corners, busy with initiation plans and the campus happenings of the day. Bugs Landon and Red Wallace smoked and sang softly before the grate fire to Squib's thrumming piano accompaniment.

Stephen, who never smoked, lounged in an easy chair and closed his eyes, while Squib switched from choppy chords to his favorite South Sea intermezzo and then to a long-suffering ballad that was well suited to a quiet mood. Stephen sat very still, listening. He was thinking—of his thesis and of Psych. 1. Yes, he must meet the members of Professor White's class and talk over the work—it would help him in grading the papers. He must see Miss Barry about that point in her discussion of association centers.

The long-suffering ballad grew softer. It was very slow and soothing, and Stephen relaxed. He was in class again, and now Professor White was asking him the name of that pretty, black-eyed girl in the third row. . . .

The music stopped with a flourish and a bang. Stephen's head thumped vigorously on the back of his chair.

"That is Helen Barry," he exclaimed, in

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tones that reached the farthest window-seat, loud and startling.

The astonished Rhos tangled themselves up in their haste to reach the bewildered and blinking Ansley.

“What in Heaven’s name have we here?” demanded Al Taylor. “Helen Barry! Great! Wait a minute, Stephen!”

But Stephen had gone. Al collapsed on the floor, uttering a succession of unintelligible sounds.

“How about it, Red? Did you hear that?” asked Bugs Landon. “You are going to take her to the Prom., aren’t you? Do you think she will pass Psych. 1?”

“Got any tobacco about you?” was Red’s only comment.

Red was not at all disturbed. But he dreamed that night of Stephen Ansley and Charlotte Hill and Helen Barry, standing in a gigantic bird cage under a wedding bell of squirming milk-white rats, while fuzzy green guinea pigs gibbered and swung madly on miniature trapezes.

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II

Shrill, vociferous squeals issued from a basement room in Anatomy. Charlotte Hill's guinea pigs desired their luncheon. Stephen Ansley tapped on the door. As it swung open from within, the urgent pipings sank to a doubtful and confused bur—r, followed by a general silence. Stephen and Miss Hill nodded approvingly, glancing around at the timid little creatures now huddled together close against the wire mesh, in the corners of the three large cages.

Miss Hill tiptoed across to her desk. As the laboratory routine proceeded without further interruptions, the hungry guinea pigs remembered their luncheon and began to gnaw the sides of their prisons, some of them chuckling confidently. When Charlotte approached with a pan of freshly cut and fragrant carrots, the frenzied squeals began again and the thick-bodied, black-and-grayish yellow animals slouched and dragged themselves to the front of the cages, attempting to stick their blunt, rabbit-like noses through the wires. The car-

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rot-lady was generous to all but the ones that were to undergo experiment 5b.

Stephen carefully watched the preparations for the experiment, exclaiming delightedly when he noticed new and ingenious arrangements of the test apparatus. Had he not been such a scientific young man, he might have spent his enthusiasm on Charlotte herself. Al Taylor, now, or Bugs Landon, would not have become excited over a lot of laboratory fixings; they would have tumbled about the room breaking glassware in their efforts to help out and get acquainted.

For no one would have said of Miss Hill that she was probably good to her parents, or awfully kind-hearted. She was not that type of graduate student, even if she was writing a monograph about the psychic life of the guinea pig. You would not have believed that she knew whole books of queer scientific things and could say them backwards if she chose. Her hair was sort of blond and fluffy and her eyes were sort of blue and her cheeks were sort of pink and plump. And she was sort of medium-sized.

Stephen was proud of Charlotte. He con-

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sidered her work remarkably effective. So he looked straight past her at the lovely structure of the wire maze; straight past the pink of her cheeks and the blue of her eyes. In some ways he was rather slow.

Charlotte—well, Charlotte noticed, and told herself that she liked Stephen's unsentimental approbation and what she called the "sexless atmosphere" of the scientific department. Very often she would smile quietly over Stephen's little fits of abstraction and his peculiarities. Once, when she wrote to her mother she spoke of him as "a fine young fellow and not a bit handsome." Which was perfectly true. He was not, as the Rhos admitted, a prize beauty, but that didn't matter in the least. Stephen's face, somehow, had never quite lived up to his finely proportioned head. His nose was too large, and his eyes squinted. But, the Rhos asked, what of that? He could stand comfortably under the outstretched arm of six-foot Bugs Landon; but that was because he never thought to straighten up to his full height.

Stephen came to attention when informed that the test was about to begin. Both he and

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Miss Hill were prepared to observe minutely every phase of the experiment, designed to check a result obtained previously. Charlotte lifted a mother guinea pig and a three-days-old "piggy" from cage A and transferred them to the large experiment-box by the window. Then the work began. Stephen and Charlotte noted each movement of the guinea pigs, correcting and adding figures to a table of psychological hieroglyphics. At last they finished.

"You see, I was right," said Charlotte, as she shook her loose notes before the gorging inhabitants of cage A.

Then the scientists sat down and talked. Much of what they said was unpronounceable. For Stephen had done with the rats, and Charlotte had done with the guinea pigs, what certain rather famous scientific persons had done with certain other animals, only they had gone a little farther than the others. They shook hands on it, and Charlotte had the tiniest bit of a proud glow in her eyes.

"My heartiest congratulations for the best work ever done here by a woman, Miss Hill," said Stephen.

That sounded too stiff and formal, and both

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felt relieved when their attention was suddenly directed to the window. Red Wallace was trying to make himself heard through the basement grating:

“May—I—come—in?”

Stephen nodded and Red blustered in upon Stephen's description of a very absorbing experiment a moment later, frightening the guinea pigs into a state of quivering hysteria with his loud knock.

“You people go right on talking,” he smiled graciously when he had been introduced to Miss Hill. “I 'm in no hurry.”

“Well, rat 6, as I said, was then tried with the food-box,” continued Stephen. “In order to open the door, it was obliged to walk to the end of the inclined plane which I had placed back of the box. It worked the combination accidentally the first time, the latch being drawn from its socket as soon as the weight counterbalanced the friction of the string and latch, the door falling by means of a spring. Having solved the mystery in this way and obtained access to the food, it next walked immediately to the door and——”

“Oh, I know a better one than that,” bragged

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Red. "I once possessed a hoop-snake, of which I was very fond. It was a remarkable pet. Having need one day of a barrel of water and finding that our only barrel was lacking a hoop, my sagacious snake volunteered to act——"

Red was rudely silenced by a strong grip on his collar.

"Red, you need n't hurry away," laughed Stephen. "But what do you want?"

"Want a dance for the Senior Prom. Oh, yes, you've got to go. Closer relations with the student body. As a special concession, you can have two dances—fourth and twelfth. I'm taking Helen Barry."

"Fourth and twelfth—Helen Barry," repeated Stephen. "All right."

"Going to the Prom., Miss Hill?" inquired Red, on the principle that one should strive to keep talking.

"No, I'm getting too old for parties, Mr. Wallace," the very scientific young woman replied. And she smiled her very dimpliest and sweetest smile.

Stephen did not hear the question nor the answer, nor see the smile. He was pulling on his

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overcoat and wondering why he had missed the last five Washington Promenades. He was glad Red had reminded him. He was still more pleased when he and Red met Helen Barry as they strolled across the campus.

“I have two dances with you for the Washington Prom.,” he stammered, when Red had artlessly inquired whether Miss Barry knew Mr. Ansley.

“Why, Professor Ansley, that ’s perfectly lovely.”

Stephen saw and heard this time. He wondered if Red would not have liked to receive that sign of favor. Red did not seem to be disturbed, however, when he left Stephen and started toward Foster with Miss Barry. A wild idea of kidnaping Red and carrying him into the mountain fastnesses entered Stephen’s mind; then he could take Miss Barry to the Prom. himself. The inspiration fled as quickly as it came; they always did. In the first place, there were no mountain fastnesses. He turned back toward the Commons.

One electric bulb shed a soft light in Hitch-

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cock 12. Stephen was drowsily reading a definition in the Psychological and Philosophical Dictionary: “ ‘ (AS. *lufian*, to love) : Ger. *liebe*; Fr. *amour*; Ital. *amore*.—Dispositional interest of an exclusive kind—manifests itself in following emotional states—pleasure in the presence of the object—pain occasioned by his absence—’ why not *her* absence?—‘two kinds—fraternal, romantic’—here it is, *romantic*—‘in romantic love the exclusiveness of the interest is much stronger—conative ingredient intrudes itself into consciousness—extreme restlessness is felt—mental distraction—mental—distraction——’ ”

The feeble rays from the electric bulb were foolishly trying to shine through gleams of dusty sunlight when John, the janitor, opened the door in the morning.

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III

Bartlett Gymnasium was gorgeous in its Prom. clothes. The tall, gray walls, bright and smooth in the moonlight streaming over Mitchell Tower, looked familiar enough as you drove up to the canopied entrance; only, you wondered if each one of those great, clean stones had n't been scrubbed for the occasion. The shining lights at each side of the doorway prepared you for something very unusual inside; and you were not disappointed. You could not expect the Washington Promenade to have the prosaic setting of a track meet or a basket-ball game.

Helen Barry expressed her delight as she bounced through the big middle door into the gymnasium. The door was open, of course; Red Wallace was holding it back as far as the heavy hinges would permit. Miss Barry would have managed in some way, however, had it been shut and barred. She always bounced through things, emerging inevitably and triumphantly at the point desired.

“What do you think of it, Mr. Wallace?”

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she demanded, as she indicated the gay maroon trappings of the stairway, the maroon carpet on the tiled floor of the hall and the maroon frills on the many lights, and nodded to several young men, all in a baffling and marvelously complicated gesture. Then she bounced toward the cloak-room. Red spent the next ten minutes in pulling on his new white gloves and meditating upon Miss Barry's remarkable vivacity until the subject of his thoughts, a vision in countless white ruffles, suddenly appeared at the foot of the stairs, ready for the ascent to the Prom. floor.

"Upstairs it's something wonderful," she fluttered, "and you must like it whether you do or not. Some of the seniors made me help decorate. Hello, Margery!"

Red had not evolved a reply when he found himself at the top of the staircase, compelled to talk to Mrs. Sand. He told Mrs. Sand that the decorations were "great." This idea, with variations of "bully" and "immense," furnished him with conversational material for the next three hours. After that he spoke of the "great" and "bully" and "immense" supper arrangements.

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The baseball cages of Bartlett had been drawn up to form a great canopy over the Prom. floor. An occasional carnation, showing through the green of ferns and vines interwoven in the netting, strove bravely to create an illusion of floral abundance. The railing of the hanging running-track was festooned with maroon and white bunting, an overgrown rosette of uncertain proportions at each supporting rod. The palms at each end of the pavilioned space, the maroon banners on the parallel bars, the hundreds of little pennants in corners and windows, and the brilliant gilt and satin trophies of athletic victories,—all were doing faithful duty. Overhead, a huge letter of fire flashed and burned—the “C.”

Stephen Ansley, seated beside Charlotte Hill in one corner of the room, was talking of the glories of the nineties when Red and Helen Barry came up.

Stephen was singing very softly and quite off the key:

“Cobb Hall was then the only place
Where we could daily flunk,
And in the dear old Drexel ‘Dorm,’
Was the only place to bunk.”

“I’m sure you never flunked in your life,

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Professor Ansley," laughed Miss Barry. "Don't you think the song is wrong?"

Stephen wished she would not call him "professor."

"Why, I was n't always so highly educated," was the only reply he could think of.

Then Stephen relapsed into an awkward silence and grew still redder in the effort to appear at ease. The others did not seem to notice; they were busy talking. In ordinary circumstances, Stephen assured himself, he could think of something to say. If so, what was wrong now of all times? Had n't he come on Miss Barry's account? Where on earth were his brains, and why did that left pump begin to pinch unmercifully, horribly, and—"ouch."

"He's talking the white rat language," explained Red.

"It's only that left pump. I was afraid it was a little snug," faltered Stephen, weakly, and then Red led Miss Barry away to join the grand march. Margery Miller and Johnny Roberts had taken their positions at the head of the straggling line; Wallace and Miss Barry had promised Roberts to come early

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and help out with some of the new figures. Stephen and Charlotte joined the line well back.

Stephen and Miss Hill had cut a meeting of a psychological society in order to attend the Prom. Over in Haskell the professors probably were reading most important papers, as Stephen had foreseen when he asked Charlotte to go to the Prom. the day after Red had given him those two dances with Miss Barry. Charlotte had really overworked herself on the experiments, he thought; she needed recreation. He did not know that she had accepted because she wanted him to get away from his books for a time. They were very considerate, for scientists.

Charlotte, in a wonderful pink gown, seemed utterly oblivious of such things as pyramidal fibers and peripheral nervous systems. No one would have asked that bright-haired girl with Stephen Ansley for information concerning kinesthetic sensations or the medulla spinalis. Stephen thought she smiled in a queer way when he alluded to the research experiments. He wondered what she meant. He tried to

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think, until the dancers formed in a great, living "C" and sang:

"Tonight we gladly sing the praise
Of her who owns us as her sons;
Our loyal voices let us raise,
And bless her with our benisons."

And the rest of "Alma Mater."

Well, that was over, and he could sit down and rest his foot. Perhaps that fool pump would stop. Stephen was wrong; tight pumps never stop until they have tortured their victims to the verge of lunacy.

"Of course, we'll dance this," he said when Charlotte reminded him that the music had begun. "No, I'm not limping. Yes, I am quite well, thanks."

Stephen thought Charlotte might have guessed about the pump, but she did not mention it. Elizabeth Strawn and Margery Miller, secured for the second and third dances by Red Wallace and Bugs Landon, who had filled his program, were even more thoughtlessly unconscious of his suffering. He forced himself to give intelligent answers to the silly remarks of these young women. It would be different during the next dance; that was

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with Helen Barry. There she was, dancing past with Red, slim and graceful and pretty as—much prettier than he had thought, in fact quite the prettiest girl he had seen, with the black hair of hers all curly and wavy, and black eyes shining and red lips always parted in the bewitching little laugh. And that frothy white gown, almost hidden behind that great black hulk of a fellow—

Stephen heard a sudden ripping sound Margery Miller extricated his left foot from the ruins of a lace flounce and suggested sweetly—almost too sweetly—that they sit out the rest of the waltz in that cute little corner over there. Miss Miller impressed Stephen as an extraordinarily flighty and fidgety young person. He wondered how she managed to keep up that babbling flow of talk without occasionally imparting an idea. His comfort was not increased by his conviction that she considered him a grandmotherly old clumsy. This was an injustice to Margery who really thought nothing at all on the subject. But Stephen was sure she did, and he was immensely relieved when an important young

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junior strutted up to claim her for the fourth dance.

The fourth! He had forgotten where he had last seen Helen Barry and he could n't make out the faces at the other end of the hall. He found her, finally, chatting with Johnny Roberts on the winding stairs of the running-track. The dance was half finished, and Roberts used up a whole minute in leaving. In that brief space Stephen forgot what he had planned to say, and the music stopped before he remembered. Which was just as well, as he always got mixed up in a two-step when he tried to talk.

Stephen's left pump was boring a deep hole in his heel, and he longed to sit down, but the friendly support of even a shaky folding chair was denied him. Miss Barry immediately dragged him upstairs to the track, where the President and four or five of the patronesses were holding court. Groups of dancers were leaning over the railing and viewing the Prom. floor through the leafy pavilion roof, and some were climbing the banks at the turns of the track and sliding down again at the risk of damaging their magnificent apparel.

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Most of these were rank Junior College people. Stephen frowned at them and thought, correctly, that they ought to be spanked.

“I have not asked you how you like English 1,” began Stephen. “Everybody else has, of course, but we might as well follow the prescribed formula. Now you must say: ‘Horrid, is n’t it? I shall just scrape through.’”

“It ’s horrid, yes; but I did n’t even scrape through. I got the trailer last quarter and I am making it up right now,” replied the author of the brilliant paper about association centers.

Stephen could have choked some blundering English 1 instructor for putting Helen Barry into the trailer with a lot of freshman woodenheads.

“Well, those things will happen,” he consoled her. “I suppose the class was too large and some one had to go.”

That was the rest of the formula. When you find a freshman taking English 3, you say, “How on earth any one can catch the trailer is more than I can see.”

“By the way, do you know Ribot?” asked Stephen. He was beginning to remember his

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real purpose in cultivating Miss Barry's acquaintance. He thought a discussion of the affective elements of consciousness would be appropriate. "I have been wanting to ask you since that day I took Professor White's psychology class."

"You mean that little red-haired Three-Quarters Club fellow?"

"I referred to Ribot, the psychologist," he explained.

"Oh, that Lebolt! I'm afraid I don't know him, Professor Ansley. Was he a very exciting man?"

Helen could have bluffed better than that; but she was engaged in poking her white fan through every third hole in the wire railing and counting the pokes.

"Why, I was certain," Stephen said, "quite certain that your paper contained a reference to Ribot's work. It was yours, was it not?"

Helen misunderstood the question, and stopped poking.

"No, it was not mine, all of it," she returned slowly. "You see, I don't even remember what was in the thing. I had to write it in an hour, so I just copied it out of a book in the

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library at home. It was a silly, high school trick, and I suppose I ought to be flunked for it. I've felt like a criminal ever since."

Stephen felt like a criminal, too. Red Wallace rushed up just then, and the instructor limped toward the opposite stairway to find Charlotte—Charlotte and a seat. Yes, he believed he would sit down for a while, he told Miss Hill. Fifteen minutes of blissful release from that inane hopping about the floor!

"Don't you sometimes wonder at the pleasure otherwise sensible people seem to get out of all this jumping and sliding?" he said.

"Where is your psychology?" laughed Miss Hill. "No, I don't wonder. I just jump and slide, too. So do the guinea pigs, in their own way."

"The guinea pigs are rather awkward, you know," Stephen sparred. "We found that out. That big fellow in cage C, now—number 4—I imagine, is a good deal like me. You remember how clever he was for a while and how he solved the labyrinth when he was three days old and never got any farther and never will? He is an old fogey. I'm sure he would not enjoy a two-step."

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“Number 4 was born a guinea pig; it was n’t his fault,” Charlotte objected. “At least give him credit for finding the center of the maze at the inconsiderable age of three days. It is n’t every one who arrives at such an achievement at that period. And I can’t help thinking that he is contented. Your rats, for instance, are only learning to crawl at three days.”

“Very true,” admitted Stephen. “Number 4 had one precocious success and then stopped stock still. A plain case of abnormal psychical and neural maturity. You see, he could not possibly be a good dancer. He would be hopelessly out of place at a Prom.”

Charlotte smiled at Stephen’s tottering logic.

“I am the same way,” he continued. “Very likely I was a wonderful baby. I thought I was a wonderful freshman once—for a very short time. But I was not. I was the guinea pig type. If I had been a white rat freshman, I should have spent three days in learning to crawl and then I’d have astonished the whole campus by my remarkable and ever increasing ability to do a fair amount of everything. I

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should have been like Red Wallace. Red could not have solved a simple labyrinth when he came here. He knew everybody by name before he had stayed a month. I went in for a Ph.D. and now I seem to have it safe—and very little else. I confess that I envy Red, and white rats, their cleverness.”

“Which should prove what you started out to prove, but does not,” laughed Charlotte. “Now, you had better find your next partner. I see Mr. Landon coming for me.”

Stephen began to regret that he had the twelfth dance with Helen Barry; for life is not worth living when one's left foot is the size and temperature of a bushel of boiling potatoes. Stephen's left foot was gradually assuming this unfortunate condition. Long before the twelfth he felt that his very existence was a hateful and burdensome thing. He would have welcomed a sudden earthquake—a kind, accommodating convulsion of nature that would have shaken the whole Prom. to fragments without hurting anybody, except to destroy all the pumps. He was sure he wanted no one permanently crippled; at any rate, not Charlotte.

Miss Hill was very kind to suggest going

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home when she discovered his tragic state after the eighth, Stephen thought, but of course he could not agree to that. He slipped the patent leather torture off for an ecstatic moment, while Charlotte shielded his foot with her pink skirt, but the difficulty he encountered when he tried to put it on again and the memory of the ghastly second when it seemed he never could get it back in time to hobble the necessary ten miles after Professor White's giggling young daughter, warned him against further liberties of that sort.

Stephen expected to find Miss Barry still penitent, perhaps tearful, as the result of her confession about the "cribbed" Psychology paper. But she had evidently forgotten—so many things were more pleasant to remember and to talk about. She told Stephen what a perfectly lovely waltzer Mr. Landon was, and was n't Mr. Wallace funny, and was n't Margery Miller cute and was n't Miss Hill adorable and sweet and noble-looking? Yes, Stephen silently agreed, Charlotte *was* a charming girl, and that young Professor Dace was a lucky dog. Charlotte was reasonably calm and could say a sensible thing sometimes; she was not

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forever chattering about nothing at all, like—like some girls.

Stephen and Helen immured themselves behind a group of poisonous-green rubber plants. Red Wallace and Charlotte found them there.

“This was the supper dance, and I didn’t know it. Everybody’s gone to Hutchinson. I’m starving,” cried Red. He shot a dark glance at Stephen and slid away with Helen.

“White rats, both of them,” Stephen observed. “And perfect specimens. They will be nibbling their lettuce in two minutes.”

What happened then has never been recorded in *The Daily Maroon*, and thereby a certain member of the faculty has been spared much. Stephen Ansley sent two shining patent leather pumps flying through an open window into the frosty outer air.

“I’m going to Hitchcock after some real shoes,” he announced, limping happily after Charlotte.

Did you ever hear of a Psych. 1 instructor doing that sort of thing?

That would have looked bad enough in *The Maroon*. But the story of how Charlotte waited, shivering, in the corridor under the

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Tower, while Stephen, hatless and pumpled, dashed down Fifty-Seventh Street, through Hull Gate and into his room, how Stephen dived madly, desperately, under his bed and scrambled wildly about in a mass of haberdashery in a vain attempt to find two shoes that would mate, and how finally he climbed and fell through a neighboring transom and emerged disheveled and breathless with Professor Hodge's Sunday shoes,—all this would have made Petey Strong, of *The Maroon*, a famous man. Petey would have given his bull-pup for a yarn like that.

Charlotte was almost freezing; Stephen, in Hitchcock, was smearing Professor Hodge's property, and his fingers, with blacking. Charlotte stamped her toes on the cold stone floor; Stephen came rushing back, a large, inky, spattered streak stretching diagonally across his face, and three gaping wounds in coat and trousers.

Charlotte's little silver mirror told him about his face. Charlotte's tiny lace handkerchief developed the streak into an evenly spread, shiny, circular smudge. No wonder the colored gentleman in the check-room side-stepped nervously when Stephen called for his

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“hat and shoes.” The colored gentleman had a horrible fear of maniacs, harmless or otherwise. He was only partially reassured when the strange person met a pink-frocked young woman in the hall and departed without further sign of his sad state.

Ten minutes later Stephen was standing alone outside of Beecher, trying to believe that he was only a mild sort of fool for messing up the Prom. He looked up at the ivy on the walls, and wondered what Charlott thought. Over in Bartlett, Red Wallace and Helen Barry were whirling about in a fast two step. Stephen did not wonder what they thought. He did n't care.

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IV

“By the way, Red.”

Squib Morris swung round on the piano-stool and faced a pile of highly colored pillows reposing on the window-seat of the Rho music room. The pillows stirred expectantly. One of them, portraying a much coiffured and bejeweled young woman tending a flock of gigantic ultramarine sheep, fell to the floor.

“By the way, Red,” repeated Squib.

“That makes two by the ways,” came the muffled voice of Red Wallace.

“I suppose you have heard that Stephen Ansley drew Helen Barry’s card for the Foster annual?”

“Stephen Ansley!” Red flopped round and immediately flopped back. “Why, of course. Now if you have anything to say, be brief. I’m reading.”

“Oh, I’ve said it already,” and Squib once more attacked the piano.

“Thanks, so much,” said Red, wearily, leaning over to rescue the haughty shepherdess.

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“You know almost everything, don’t you. Squibby? Now smoke a cigarette or something, and if it ’s all the same to you, keep as quiet as possible.”

Having thus neatly disguised his real feelings, Red viciously turned *The Daily Maroon* and looked out of the window. So it was Stephen Ansley after all. One stingy invitation to pay for the Prom. and then—Ansley. Not that he would allow himself to pine away over a Foster dance or Helen Barry or any one else. Oh, no! He would simply ask one of the million or so other girls to the Rho formal. Perhaps somebody would take Helen; perhaps not. Maybe Stephen would ask her. Well, let him! Red rumped his paper again and began reading the subscription rates on page two, column one. Also, he read the names of the reporting staff, an editorial on the necessity of everybody’s coming out for the debate, and a terribly smart “communication” about something that seemed to call for superior diction and several Latin epigrams. Red despised people who wrote “communications” to *The Maroon*; especially those

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who used big words and tried to show off. So he said "Rot!" and began on column two.

"What say?" inquired Squib.

There was no answer. Red was glancing down the official list of candidates for degrees at the March Convocation. He wanted to see whether Lawrence was going to graduate this time, or just thought he was, as usual. No, Lawrie's name was not there. Red skipped most of the other degrees. Bachelors of Divinity and Masters of Art are usually people you never heard of, anyhow. Doctors of Philosophy are more interesting; you have to do such an impossible amount of work to be one. He looked at the names at the bottom of the page. Stephen Ansley headed the list of Ph.Ds. Miss Charlotte Hill came next. Stephen and Miss Hill were going to get their doctor's diplomas together! Red's mental reaction was simple. The Rho formal, the Foster annual and two graduate students were concerned in it.

"Squibby dear, whom are you going to take to our formal?" he asked.

"Why, Miss Parks, Helen Barry's cousin. Weren't we four all going together?"

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“No, I guess not. I think I shall take Miss Hill—Stephen Ansley’s friend, you know.” Red was using all his easy nonchalance. “I’m going to ask her this evening. Have you got another one of those Amenhoteps? Thanks. Play that raggy thing again.”

Squib struck the first bars of a funeral march instead. He had seen hundreds of those mushy campus love affairs go to pieces. Even Rho formals made small appeal to him. Squib was eighteen.

The philosophy of Red Wallace was more mature. Red frequently, and noisily, thanked Heaven that he was not one of those blasé chaps who are always getting off cheap humor about college life and college romance. He had an abiding faith in Professor Sand’s quarterly lecture, which taught that the college campus is the real world and not merely a preparation for life. The professor’s sentiment squared nicely with Red’s own ideas; it was pleasant and comfortable and logical, if you looked at it in a certain way. Red accepted it and elaborated it into a glorification of Foster annuals and Rho formals. This made it all the more pleasant and comfortable and logical.

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Helen Barry had disappointed him. He decided he was quite right in asking Miss Hill. This was during dinner. He was not so sure as he walked toward Beecher Hall at eight o'clock. He feared Miss Hill might think his invitation strange. Maybe she had expected Stephen Ansley to ask her. But Stephen would probably be walking in the park with Helen. Red would have felt more at ease had he been certain how he would spite anybody by taking Miss Charlotte Hill of Beecher Hall to the Rho dance. He was weakening as he rang the bell. The maid ushered him at once into the presence of Miss Hill—and Stephen Ansley.

“How do you do, Miss Hill? How do, Stephen?” he managed to say. Then Red Wallace, junior militant and dancing man extraordinary, plumped foolishly into the nearest chair and had to be encouraged to talk.

“Mr. Ansley has finally eaten a Beecher dinner,” Miss Hill was saying. “It has taken him a year to make the plunge.”

What an empty remark! Well, he would have to say something. He couldn't stare at that hideous water-color much longer.

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“I came over to congratulate you—both of you,” he blurted. “Everybody thinks it ’s great. Of course we knew it all the time.”

This statement produced a most alarming change in the atmosphere. Stephen looked rather pale and smiled painfully. Miss Hill seemed to be hesitating between flight and collapse.

“Oh, I didn’t mean that,” stammered Red. “I meant about your taking your doctor’s degrees at Convocation tomorrow. It was in *The Maroon*.”

“Oh, yes. Doctor’s degree—*Maroon*,” Stephen agreed vacantly.

“*Daily Maroon*,” murmured Miss Hill. “Of course.”

Red was beyond his depth. He wallowed on, blindly, shamelessly.

“Oh,” he said, “I knew—that is, I had heard that you and Professor Dace—Stephen told me that he——”

“Dear old Professor Dace, who taught me my very letters,” laughed Miss Hill. “He calls himself my father of learning, though he has a large enough family of his own. What did you hear about him—about us?”

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Stephen took off his glasses and rubbed them.

"I heard he was still as hale and hearty as ever," Red lied.

"The dear old professor has been an invalid for years," returned Miss Hill. And Red began wallowing again.

Stephen was wondering where on earth he had heard that gossip about Charlotte's engagement to "young Professor Dace" and why he had been idiot enough to believe it.

"You and Stephen are going to teach next year, are n't you?" Red floundered on.

"We have some more research work in view for next quarter," Charlotte said.

"Yes—for a year or more. Several years in fact," broke in Stephen. Charlotte glanced at him questioningly, eyebrows raised. Stephen blushed violently and brushed an imaginary spot from his cuff. Red Wallace looked from one to the other. Then he arose and shook hands and mumbled something about "exams"—"A bunch of irregular French verbs, and you know what they are." He would have time to call up Helen, if he hurried.

"I think I shall remain a while," Stephen

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said. "Miss Hill and I have our research plans to discuss."

Cutting across the Midway, Red thought that Stephen really need n't have laid it on so laboriously about the research. Foxy old Stephen!

When the Beecher clock strikes ten, it is time to go home. Stephen stayed till eleven.

Candidates for the doctorate should not be excited on Convocation Day. They were bachelors long ago. Besides, they have "problems" to think out. But Stephen Ansley had been rather agitated all day. The Matutinal at the Quadrangle Club had been the first noteworthy event of the morning. He had sat beside Charlotte and afterwards had walked with her to Beecher. That had been the second noteworthy event. And now, as he slipped on his doctor's gown, he wondered if he should be seated next Charlotte at Convocation. He took a last look at himself in the small oval mirror on the dresser, and transferred his Rho badge from his gray waistcoat to his black one. Then he unfastened it and sat down and looked at it.

He had owned the little gold badge for eight years, never once forgetting to wear it, never

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even dreaming of surrendering it to any of the girls who had called it just cute, and who would have loved to fasten their collars in the back with it, or to place it more prominently in the center of their glittering assortments of high school and club trophies. Stephen and the badge had learned a good deal together. And long before he knew these things so well, he had an excellent reason for keeping it, for the Rhos had a solemnly worded rule stating that the official badge of the fraternity might be given only to one's mother, one's sister or one's fiancée. The Rhos usually obeyed the rule. Occasionally a very young freshman or sophomore added his pin to the collection of some very young freshman or sophomore girl, but just as often he went trotting back after it when he had been sufficiently lectured. Only the night before, Stephen had been telling Charlotte about a case of that kind. She had pitied poor little Petey Strong, who happened to be the latest offender against Rho law. Charlotte, who hated sentiment, Charlotte, the scientific young woman, who loved only the ugly, slouching guinea pigs of the laboratory, had felt sorry for Petey.

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His chair tilted back against the wall, Stephen pondered this deeply. He saw Charlotte on her knees beside him in front of a wire cage in the basement of Anatomy. She was looking straight into his eyes and speaking to him—about an infundibulum and an optic chiasm. He saw her in Beecher, seated very near him, smiling gloriously and confiding her love—for the guinea pigs. It was the same in every picture—always this futile talk of futile things, and always a little spot just over her heart, a cold, lonesome little spot, that should have held a plain gold pin. He replaced his badge and squinted down his nose at it. It was time for the procession to form.

When he reached Hutchinson, the Head Marshal was making a final hasty review of the irregular files of candidates. Excited student Marshals were rushing about mending the breaks in the ranks and informing wide-eyed sophomore associates who wandered out of bounds, that they simply must keep their alphabetical positions unless they wanted to spoil the whole show.

Stephen hurried down the black-gowned lines, past the chattering sophomores and the quieter

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seniors, and into his place beside Charlotte at the head of the Doctors of Philosophy just as the procession began to move forward to the strains of the organ sounding from Mandel. And it seemed the most natural thing in the world that he should be in that particular place—that he and Charlotte should march together down the sunny corridor into Mandel. Red Wallace and Helen Barry, waiting outside the door, waved to them out of the gray light, and Stephen and Charlotte smiled happily at the children. Between Stephen and Red there passed a swift, sidelong glance of complete understanding.

The funereal solemnity of the professors as they passed on toward the stage may have looked impressive to some of the audience. Stephen, standing beside Charlotte in the section reserved for the doctors, hardly noticed the United Faculties of Arts, Literature, and Science, stalking by in their robes of office. The Vice-President of the University Congregation and the Vice-President of the Board of Trustees, and the President of the Board of Trustees and the Convocation Chaplain might have been the lowliest “sophs.” Even the Con-

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vocation Orator and the President of the University, whose progress down the long aisle was followed by a great craning of necks and buzzing whispers of "There he is," "There they are," failed to interest Stephen, who was gazing abstractedly at the mud-colored hair of the young man in the next row and listening to the deep, bass roar of the organ-pipes. When everybody gasped and sat down, or sat down and gasped, he forgot to remove his cap, because the owner of the mud-colored mop was a Marshal, and privileged to remain covered. Charlotte told him to take it off. Which also seemed perfectly natural and not in the least embarrassing.

Then the Convocation Orator, a very thin and frightened-looking person with a very thin voice, began to speak. He had views about something connected with the cosmic forces; no one could be quite sure what they were, for he grew more and more inaudible as he approached them along a mental path of many windings. Why, oh why, wondered the sophomore associates, could n't he tell his secret and sit down and give somebody else a chance?

Stephen did n't mind. The pictures had come

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back again and the thin voice seemed quite far away; so did the music of the organ after the address, and the voice of the President as he announced the awards of honors. Charlotte was smiling now in every picture; smiling quizzically out of the eyes that were sort of blue. Stephen smiled, too, and did not bother to squint at the close-serried ranks of sophomore associates and bachelors crowding past the President's chair up in front. But he did look once, wondering, at the real Charlotte sitting beside him. That was why he dared give her hand a little congratulatory squeeze as he saw the tall senior Marshal making toward the doctor's section. There was a small gold pin in the middle of that squeeze; it nestled there in a small and trembling white hand. The Marshal, who happened to be Bugs Landon, touched Stephen on the arm and wigwagged the six doctors into a standing line by a system of upward and sidewise jerks of his square chin.

Stephen's knees felt just a bit wobbly and his head just a bit light and queer as he trailed after Bugs to the stage. It was rather upsetting, after all. He bowed before it

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was time when Bugs left him in front of the row of deans, facing the great carved chair where the President sat. The Dean of the Graduate Schools recited his Latin presentation formula without stopping for breath or missing so much as a single prefix. The President muttered something in the same tongue, complacently disregarding the feelings of the sophomore associates, who could n't understand a word of it.

“Stephen Newcomb Ansley,” announced the Dean of the Graduate Schools.

“Doodle-dee dum-dum-de-doodle dee-dee,” said the President. At least that was the way Petey Strong of *The Maroon* wrote it down in his notes. Petey thought that was awfully funny; nearly as funny as the way Stephen ducked his head and almost choked when the dean slipped the heavy, maroon-lined hood over his shoulders and pulled the blue neck-band into place with a sharp tug.

“Tum-da-teedle doodle lump-te-dee,” added the President. Petey Strong bit the end off his best pencil because Stephen tried to take his diploma before the President got to his final “doodle-dum” or whatever it was he was saying.

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Stephen Ansley, Ph.D., moved to the edge of the stage, where Bugs was waiting, and stood very straight while the clapping of hands died out. The President was speaking again. That was Charlotte's hood going over her shoulders; and that was Charlotte's diploma. A great wave of sound came up from the hundreds in front and rose to a storm of applause as the two doctors stood side by side on the first step. Stephen risked his footing to turn toward Charlotte. And there, on that spot over her heart, shone a little plain gold badge.



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THE news editor of *The Daily Maroon* said he feared Petey Strong was no good, a sentiment which Petey cheerfully, even enthusiastically, approved. Petey admitted that he was awful on grammar and all that, but he thought it would be fine sport to be a hustler. His parents agreed that he might as well try *The Maroon* as anything else. His mother hoped it would improve his spelling—Petey had an orthographic system of his own—and his father said he would be willing to buy the college paper if it would keep Petey quiet for a few minutes. And so the freshman approached his task with none of the reverence that a hustler should have, and the news editor noticed it.

Petey Strong greatly needed some work to get him interested and a partner to remind him continually that he was enjoying himself. He found both in an hour and a quarter; it took him just that long to cover his first assignment and sight the tall, awkward figure and the turned-up nose of Sylvester Fielding.

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The news editor sent him to see Professor Bland about the Seventh Annual Conference of the Teachers of Geology and Paleontology of the Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the North Central and Immediately Adjoining States, and he copied six sheets of paper full of large, queer words out of the program, and wrote a hundred short words for *The Maroon*, as the news editor ordered. He was just thinking how easy it was when Sylvester came into the office.

“Hello, there, Peter! Going to be a reporter?” said Sylvester.

“Hello, there, Silver! You ’ve guessed it,” said Petey.

“You ’ll be a fine rotten one.”

“You ’ll be worse, and that ’s some comfort.”

“You ’re dotty.”

“Same to you. What time is it?”

Then they clattered out to Gym. class, scattering a bunch of copy to the floor as they brushed by the desk. And the news editor decided that the small, black-eyed, bristly-haired one was probably impudent, and that the gawky, pug-nosed one said “huh” interrogatively and looked blank when addressed. The

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news editor watched them springing past the window and then turned to calm the other hustlers, who were inquiring, in chorus, please what should they do next; and he wondered what the paper was coming to.

Petey was not even certain of his own relation to *The Maroon*, so of course he did not know the duties of the rest of the people in the office. There were twice as many on the second day, and he could not identify them simply by looking at their names in the list on the editorial page. When he inquired, he discovered that he would be permitted to try for a place on a very powerful organization known as the staff, and that if he labored diligently and humbly, as befitted his position as one of the nine hustlers, he might possibly become a reporter along about Winter Quarter. The reporters, he was told, were those six very busy fellows who talked loudest and wrote most furiously and looked immensely pleased or coldly judicial, as they happened to be contemplating their own or another's stories. They, though it was almost unthinkable, had once been hustlers themselves. And the six associate editors—they seemed to come in half-dozen lots—were

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the godlike creatures who stuck their feet on the table and yawned and gave advice every so often. They were sort of "super-reporters" who had "done time." Katherine Snowden and Margery Miller, the women editors, were seniors. Miss Snowden was the one with black eyes, and Miss Miller was the one with the brown curly hair.

Paul Leeming, the athletic editor, was the slim fellow with the spectacles on the end of his nose, reading copy; and Hal North, the blond fellow with the thin lips and humorous eyes, was the managing editor and the top of the heap, and he wrote the best editorials that ever were printed. Chalmers, the big sober-faced news editor—but of course he knew Chalmers—everybody did. The business manager was the one at the roll-top desk in the corner, who glowered and ate pencils and kept telling the stenographer to "cut out that last sentence."

"It will probably take me two or three years to become managing editor," thought Petey, when he had been enlightened. For he had resolved to rise.

That afternoon he remembered that there

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was an unsettled question of journalistic efficiency between himself and Silver Fielding.

“Hello, Silver! Do you still think I ’m a rotten hustler?” he said as they met in the bath at the gym.

Silver jumped into the warm shower beside Petey.

“Yes, don’t you?”

“Maybe, but I ’ve thought up a way to find out which is rottener.”

“Come through with it.”

“We ’ll save our strings.”

“What strings?”

“I mean each of us will cut out his own articles and paste ’em together, and the one that gets the longest one—see?”

Silver turned the brass handle marked “cold” and flipped a handful of soapy water in Petey’s face. “Well, Peter,” he laughed, “I ’ll just say this. If I can ’t manage to get more than you do in *The Maroon* this quarter I ’ll—boo-oh, this water ’s freezing—I ’ll eat the gargoyles off the Reynolds Club. Because I—boo-oo-oh—I know *you*.”

Petey did not happen to like that remark, nor the laugh that went with it. He

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stopped spitting his brown sides and said, "You do, do you?" and looked up at Silver with a cold, steady stare that meant fight when he was younger, while Silver looked down at him and seemed to be vastly amused.

"You're sure you know all about me?" he repeated, still glaring.

They stood there, dripping and shivering, and measured each other up and down for a moment, as if that had a great deal to do with the argument.

"Oh, well. We'll try your little plan if you feel that way about it," said Silver.

"Yes, we will try it, and that's the way I feel about it. We'll start tomorrow," said Petey.

And then and there began the remarkable Strong-Fielding Paste-pot Handicap or the Marvelous, Merry and Mirthful Maroon Marathon, as it came to be called in the office.

Petey's mother was worried at her son's unwonted industry that evening. He shut himself up in his room and said that he intended to stay there until he had finished some important business. Mrs. Strong hoped he was not going into one of those awful bilious spells, and or-

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dered one of the maids to take him some hot chocolate and cake and part of the lamb roast at ten o'clock. When she returned from the theater and found him still writing at his white-and-gold desk, with the banquet devoured in its entirety, she sighed and kissed him good night, and said perhaps her boy was growing up and putting away childish things, not meaning the hot chocolate and cake.

Petey wrote and wrote—wrote until his fingers cramped and the pencil refused to be pushed any farther, and he felt the delicious sensation of wearing himself out in a good cause. He wrote a long article on "The First Day at the University," which he regarded as quite original. It was mostly about the prep. school he came from and the boulevard he went through on his way to the campus and some dirty children who were playing in a pile of bright autumn leaves; little innocent children gamboling by the wayside, he said, never thinking that some day they would go to college like the fellow passing there on the sidewalk. He also wrote a page of jokes, and finished by composing several editorials about college, in which he freely expressed a number of opin-

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ions that he had no business to own. And he fell asleep in his big colonial bed with his arms tossed out wearily on the snowy spread and a vague feeling that he was taking a pretty mean advantage of poor Silver. But then, Silver was much too "cocky."

He bought a pocket notebook on his way to his eight-thirty. It was a fat, friendly-looking notebook, with an index, and he thought it would be quite large enough to contain thousands of ideas. He laid his stuff on the news editor's desk and hurried out of the office, because he was afraid Chalmers might come in, and he could n't bear to be complimented before the stenographer. When he wandered back to get his assignments at ten-thirty, Chalmers told him he was sorry, but it was not exactly the right kind of copy. In fact, none of it could be used. *The Maroon* was a daily, not a monthly, nor an annual, nor yet a decennial publication. Chalmers said it in a kind way, but Petey was glad Silver didn't hear. How he would have crowed! The news editor did not tell him that Silver had just passed through a similar experience.

Chalmers called the hustlers together the

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hour before dinner and gave them a talk. He said:

“*The Maroon* is supposed to print the news about the University and about the persons and things intimately associated with it. It is intended to be interesting and, to some extent, dignified. It is read by many alumni in addition to the students now in residence, and we want it to be a good, clean record of the University. We want to print reports of all official meetings—chapel and lectures and so on—and the news of the various clubs and organizations and the news of the teams in season—football now, of course. Stir up enthusiasm—be boosters—but not editorialize in every news story. We shall try to do that in the columns reserved for that purpose. We run ‘josh’ stories sometimes, but that usually takes experience. Don’t try to be too funny. Don’t write things that we can find in the encyclopedia. Be accurate, and if you don’t use the typewriter, dot your i’s and cross your t’s and stick in a period now and then. You can find out the rest by reading the rules posted over there by the desk.”

The hustlers understood part of this, and liked it. Even Petey and Silver promptly

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forgave Chalmers for killing their stuff, because his manner was neither arrogant nor condescending. It was just right, they thought. They were glad they were going to work for him.

For Chalmers was a good news editor. He was very particular what went into the paper, of which he was proud. He sat up many nights talking to Hal North over ways to make it better. He thought it was about the best college daily in the land.

“Did you take all that in, Peter?” said Silver, as they left the office.

“Yes, did you?”

“Sure. Have anything in *The Maroon* today?”

“Oh, no,” wearily. “Did you?”

“No—o,” also wearily; “but I ’m going to have a story tomorrow.”

“So am I. So long, Silver.”

These boastful declarations were the veriest shams, but they happened to come true, because they were founded on the grim determination of two wide-awake freshmen, aided by willing friends. They laid their troubles before two kind upper-classmen, and these accommo-

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dating persons not only furnished the desired stories, but even agreed to provide unlimited additional ones on demand—promises which caused Petey and Silver to have visions of easy and complete success.

Al Taylor was the author of Petey's yarn. Al affirmed that three spies had been discovered sneaking a view of secret football practise from the windows of Anatomy; that these villains, who, with foolhardy assurance, wore the bright-hued sweaters of a rival college, had been caught red-handed while taking voluminous notes on the Old Man's formations, and after confessing their crime, had been ducked in the Botany pond until they yelled for mercy. A party of loyal Chicago men, said Al, himself among the number, had then pointed the finger of scorn at the rascals and had said a few things about the miserable hole they represented, and had told them to return whence they came and remember the time they had and much good might it do them.

Silver's story came from Wally Miles, a junior who looked responsible, but was not. Miles told a convulsing yarn of a monkey that had escaped from an operating-table in one of

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the laboratories, knocked a bottle of ether from an assistant's hand, jumped through a window, and run amuck on the campus, where it had bit a child and frightened a divinity student into spasms. It finally had been captured after a wild chase, and had been cut into small slices by the infuriated professors. Miles was not certain whether the carnage occurred on the sidewalk or in the 'lab'—he thought the 'lab.'

Chalmers would have investigated both of these narratives. But Chalmers was downtown, and one of the associate editors sent the stories to press. The big machine groaned and trembled as if deeply ashamed, and ground out the edition. Petey and Silver gleefully snipped their articles when the paper was delivered in the morning. The stories measured five inches apiece. That was pretty good for one day.

The returns began to come in before noon. The rival college had heard the spy story, and the rival campus was shaken with indignation. It did not seem to please anybody. One of the reporters asserted that he had seen several professors turning flip-flops and tearing out their whiskers, which probably was an exag-

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geration. Professor Stupp called at the office. His face was quite red. He said that a column editorial, containing a retraction and an apology, must be printed without delay. The spy "fake," he informed Chalmers, was peculiarly distressing coming just when the intercollegiate situation—an extremely delicate one—demanded the continuance of the very friendly relations between the two institutions. To be plain, there had been danger of a break for months. The reporter who was culpable should be severely reprimanded.

Immediately thereafter came another faculty member, requesting instant explanation of the ridiculous monkey article. If it had been intended as a joke, it was a pitifully feeble attempt, said he. It was most offensive and—ahem—embarrassing for reasons which should be apparent to the most unthinking. Some one with a rasping voice called up on the telephone and said that he was an anti-vivisectionist, and now had the evidence he had long desired in regard to the unspeakably brutal practises of college professors. He had drawn up resolutions, a copy of which would be forwarded to a certain society in the

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East, and there was no telling what the society would do. But it was probable, and the rasping voice rasped more slowly that the words might sink in—it was probable that it also would draw up resolutions.

The associate editor consigned Strong and Fielding to a disagreeable place, and Chalmers did as much for the associate editor; Chalmers had been talking to Al Taylor and Wally Miles, who said the freshmen ought to be paddled, and would be, for believing such dizzy stuff. Petey and Silver felt hurt.

“You got stung pretty fine, didn’t you, Peter?” grinned Silver, after Chalmers had spoken to him.

“So did you, I noticed.”

“It won’t happen again very soon.”

“Here either. I intend to get my stories myself after this.”

“Me too. You can’t go wrong then. There ’s a fellow I want to see. ’By.”

The boys told themselves that they would accomplish something at once. It would be untrue to say that they failed to do so. They enlivened *The Maroon*, caused a number of people to feel excited, and increased their strings to the length

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of twenty-eight inches apiece in two weeks. As computed by Chalmers, who watched the measuring operations, that made exactly fifty-six inches of trouble. The office could n't remember such a debauch of downright silliness. It was a crime, said Chalmers. And the most embarrassing part of it, according to the news editor, was the fact that the stuff had got by the desk.

Petey seemed to be endowed with a fatal genius for disseminating misinformation in attractively veiled form, and a twin gift for seizing upon the most unfortunate circumstances that came his way in his daily search for news. His innocent sincerity served neither to guide his freshman steps aright, nor to abate the consequences of his unwise ramblings.

One of his first unassisted feats was the placing before his fellow-students of a condensed and readable version of a very exhaustive and abstruse paper on "The Present Intellectual Tendencies of Male and Female Young Persons," which he found in a pretty tan magazine. He wrote, in his front page review, that the young women of the University had

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proved so deficient in scholarly attainment as to arouse the gravest doubts of their mental capacity and the "wisdom of maintaining our present system." This was not exactly what the author meant. It brought to the office a handful of small notes, tinted and otherwise which were not invitations to the Women's Halls. One of the notes called attention to "this latest example of the brain power of the male." Petey was sorry, but he said he had his opinion of anybody that would get up such a bunch of "piffle" in the first place.

The next issue contained another of Petey's efforts, ostensibly based upon Professor Sand's lecture on "An Estimate of Pragmatism," a subject that had struck the news editor as being dismal enough to tame even Petey, at least devoid of pitfalls for the wild young hustler. Petey was not in touch with the trend of modern philosophy, and he sat through the lecture with an expression of forlorn bewilderment upon his face, a feeling of disgust in his soul and nothing but fidgety curlicues on the open page of the fat notebook. But the lecturer made some remarks that sounded intelligent just as he was leaving the room with a worship-

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ing graduate student. Petey listened, then scribbled violently. The quote made most of the story. Professor Sand was horrified to read his confidential comments set forth nakedly in *The Maroon*. For while the expressions, "childish folderol," "absurd hypothesis," and "flimsy pretext," had seemed to the copy-reader to refer to some notion of the dim past, they were leveled at the pet theory of one of Professor Sand's colleagues, whose views had been published the day before. The allusion was obvious, and almost everybody was startled. Once more Petey was sorry. Several achievements of like magnitude and brilliancy came from his pen before Chalmers could bring himself to decide on the boy's case.

A few of Petey's mistakes resulted in the interchange of irritating personalities. He featured the captain of the football team in describing a "midnight lark" on the Midway, and was interviewed by that worthy, who was supposed to be in bed at ten every night. He printed a piece of news about the fraternity to which he was pledged, and his prospective brothers made it plain that that particular bit of information should not have been made pub-

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lic. He omitted the name of a freshman girl from a committee list, and learned, through Silver's sister, that the child made horrid faces at him whenever she saw him. But he did n't mind those things. He supposed he would have to stand it, he told Miss Fielding, like Patience on a tombstone or a sofa or whatever it was she used to camp on.

Silver seemed possessed with an evil affinity for the unpropitious phrase. His faculty for dressing up half-truths in the semblance of verity amounted to a talent comparable only to Petey's. His stories too had the property of impressing as harmless—until they came out in print. They looked so innocent in the copy

When he wrote, naïvely, that a visiting chapel orator "delivered the usual address on morality" and the bungling foreman placed above it the head, "Chestnuts! Chestnuts!" which belonged to another story altogether, the mistake escaped even the proof-reader, who was sleepy; clearly, it was not Silver's fault. When he informed the readers of *The Maroon* that one of the deans was about to "take a vacation in order to find some new ideas, as he has not had one for three years," Chalmers

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scratched his head reflectively while the campus giggled with delight. Silver explained that he meant the vacations, not the ideas; and then Chalmers realized that the boy was surely unique.

The whole University was interested in the fact that *The Maroon* had two new hustlers who were "the limit." They were pointed out on the campus. Instructors would ask in class, "Mr. Strong, have you got this straight?" and "Mr. Fielding, are you quite certain that you understand?" Some of the upper-classmen held that the hustlers might be wiser than they looked. This theory the sophomores repudiated. Clever freshman humorists, indeed! The members of the staff began to bet on the outcome of the Mirthful and Merry. "It's a toss up," said the staff. Petey and Silver were famous.

"Peter, I've got a fine, large premonition," said Silver, the day the strings were measured.

"What's the matter?"

"Something, my lad, is about to drop on you—hard."

"Huh! How about you?"

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“Oh, I don’t care for myself. But I ’d hate to see you lose out. You want to beat me so awful much.”

“Spare the tears, Silver.”

Silver persisted. It was evident that his swagger was largely assumed.

“Say, Peter,” he asked, “do you really think we ’re in bad?”

“I do,” answered Petey. “But I ’ve got a new scheme for little me. I ’m going to suppress all the wormy talks, no matter who says ’em. Too dangerous.”

“That’s just what I was about to suggest,” said Silver. “So long, Peter.”

“So long, Silver.”

But Chalmers had a plan of his own, and Chalmers was the news editor. Said he to North, who had curtly stated his opinion:

“Now you let me pace this pair of colts. I think I know them better than you. I ’ll do just as I said, and if they can’t stand it, they ’ll jump the track. If they finish at all, they ’ll do it in style and my case is won. Is it a go? All right, Hal.”

Petey and Silver soon became aware that their activities were being restrained, and by a

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determined hand. Chalmers did not use the stories they turned in, and he gave them but one assignment apiece in a week. Neither cared to humble himself before the other; so they wrote letters and themes and make-believe leads at the reporters' long table in the effort to seem decently busy. Petey told Al Taylor, sadly, that it certainly looked as if he were blowing up at the turn.

To add to the situation, Silver resorted to a shameless bit of duplicity.

"Let's see, Silver," Petey said, one hopelessly dull day. "We had twenty-eight inches apiece the last time, didn't we? What have you got now?"

"Oh, about so much." Silver's gesture implied an infinity of string. He was not going to be caught so easily as that.

"Guess we'd better measure it."

"No, we won't. I've decided to keep mine to myself. A little suspense, you know. Keep you anxious."

Petey was skeptical. "Show me some of your stuff," he challenged.

Silver took up a copy of *The Maroon* and

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dashed a pencil across the six longest stories

“Where’s your stuff today, Peter?” he asked.

Petey fell, ingloriously. He promptly pointed out the six next longest stories.

“That one and that—and that—and that one—and that—and that,” he said, jabbing holes in the page with the office shears.

This ill-conceived solace, however, proved far too hollow. The Olympic strivers became almost gloomy by reason of unwelcome periods of introspection, an act which is by no means foreign to the nature of freshmen. The introspection had to do with something known as “making good.” The worst of it was that they were held in check just when they saw the path ahead all clear and smooth—just when they could have done so well! They watched the other hustlers with jealous eyes. They studied the make-up of the paper until they thought they could tell just how many notes they would have to take if they should get certain stories. They gazed moodily at the fellow clipping paragraphs from the college exchanges that hung all along one side of the office, em-

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paled in bulging, crackling bunches on huge hooks. *They* could do that. And they were not getting a chance!

The race might have ended right there if the boys had possessed a different internal construction. But there was nothing very wrong inside of Petey and Silver. They continued to spend two hours a day at their *Maroon* duties, as they had planned the day they entered college. As the duties were fast dwindling, they took to exploring the odd corners of the campus in the hope of turning up some big stories.

Silver, always attracted by the extraordinary, prowled about the museums, investigating the wonders exhibited in the glass cases and on the walls. In Walker he liked to look at the brilliantly colored minerals and at the remains of queer animals: funny little skulls and bones and disjointed skeletons of strange monsters that must have been remarkable when they were alive—Silver wondered if the long one with the flat, triangular head used to crawl, or hop, or what. And in Haskell he greatly fancied the perspectiveless reliefs of kings of Egypt going forth behind six-legged, three-headed hobby-

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horses to hunt tame-looking wild beasts that had arrows in their backs; and the personal effects of the princess with the impossible name. He wrote *Maroon* articles about some of these but they were not used.

One afternoon Silver met Petey loafing in the corridor of the Tower buildings, and together they stole into the Commons to see the portraits. They knew hardly any of the faces but they thought them all very interesting. They smiled intimately at the Founder, sitting comfortably in his big chair—he looked quite kind and friendly at close range. And then for a long time they peered up at the face of the One who was gone—the friend of whom the fellows spoke so reverently and so sadly. And they too felt reverent and sad.

They would admire the buildings also. Petey thought Hull Gate was about the best thing on the campus, because of the gargoyles. A senior told him that the little, crawling gargoyles were freshmen, and the great, fierce ones sophomores.

Petey's independent quest led him among the professors. The stories he heard about them were most exciting. Some, he learned,

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had been almost everywhere and had seen unbelievably strange people in unbelievably strange places and were unbelievably modest about it, and some were making creepy experiments in the medical buildings. Others, he heard, were helping the city of Chicago take care of its problems, and some were spending years on the queerest problems imaginable. Most of them seemed to be doing things that made their teaching in class look small and unimportant in comparison. And these things, the fellows said, were what made the University really great.

Petey thought he ought to write about these wonderful men, so he called on some of them. When he said he was from *The Maroon*, he was usually treated politely and told that there was "nothing in shape for publication just now." Although the professors were busy, they allowed him to ask questions, wondering how long he would retain his unnatural thirst for information.

Occasionally he found out things that were not to be printed, as the day Leeming let him help with the football story, and Williams, the assistant coach, told him confidentially what

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the real line-up would be, explaining quite patiently that it was not always best to let the other team know too much. That was the time Williams introduced him to the Old Man.

And one day he met the President! He begged the favor of accompanying one of the reporters, who had an important question to ask, and who said to come along and not to act like a kid. He approached the inner office with pleasant shivers of awe; and when the door was opened, there sat the President writing at his desk. And then he looked up and smiled and told the boys to sit down, and asked Petey if he was a freshman, and how he was getting along. That was very kind of him, Petey thought. He would, at that moment, have leaped from the highest peak of Mitchell Tower, if the President had wished it. He could appreciate then what Bugs Landon had told him how at one of the Proms. the President had stood on the running-track of the Gym. and made a little talk, and how everybody crowded up close, and looked and listened and felt fine, and how they all clapped their hands so loud and shouted, "Prexy! Prexy! Prexy!" He liked to think of that.

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All this was quite agreeable, in one way. But the boys were not happy. Each string, soiled and crumpled from much inspection, now measured only thirty-two inches. It seemed as if Chalmers had him doling out the punishment with mathematical precision, which happened to be true. How were they to know that the news editor disliked to throw their stories in the waste-basket, and that he had observed their earnest efforts with a twinkling eye? The Quarter was going fast, too. North had posted a bulletin calling the board to a meeting, which was to be held earlier than usual. And they elected the reporters at the board meeting!

It is said that the deadliest enemies have been known to grow sympathetic in the presence of great calamities. Petey and Silver had reached that stage.

“Peter, do you know what they call us?” said Silver, getting into his clothes after Gym. class one day.

“Who call us?”

“The staff—*The Maroon*—everybody.”

“What do they call us?”

Silver looked serious. “They call us the Mirthful, Merry, Marathon Martyrs and a lot

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of other nutty names. Our race for space, of course. It's all over the campus."

"What of it?" and Petey tried to look bored.

"What of it? Nothing. Nothing at all. Only we seem to be about the best jokes going. And if we get stung in the elections, we'll continue to *be* jokes. I thought you might be interested." Tragically: "Peter, those fool names 'll stick to us if we go down. We'll be labeled the Mud Horses of the Universe or the Literary Lambs or the Devilish Dubbs or something."

"We'd better sprint," suggested Petey, cheerfully.

"Good Lord, I have sprinted. So have you. We're bushed. Blankety-blank-blank-blank! Something, my boy, has got to happen!"

"Blankety-blank-blank-blank! You're right, Silver. Something has got to happen—quick. Mighty quick!"

An amusing thought occurred to Petey. He looked searchingly in the direction of Silver's nose, a performance which was ever displeasing to young Mr. Fielding.

"Of course," he said, "you are not by any chance—by any chance it cannot be, that you

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are pulling in your horns?" And he twirled his cap.

Silver slammed the door of his locker. "Peter—" he said, "Peter, my boy—don't make me laugh."

Suddenly emerged from the gray background of the waning Quarter the unimpressive figure of Professor Bland of the Graduate Faculties, fated to be for a brief space the agent of the destinies of Petey Strong and Silver Fielding. For the next day, it being then high time in the routine of covering the campus to "check up" on Professor Bland's department, Chalmers sent Petey to see him. Petey went, his heart filled with gratitude for this crumb from the reportorial feast. Said the professor:

"I was agreeably surprised to note the eminently sane article you wrote some time ago concerning the work of this department. The account was commendably conservative, and contained none of the too frequent glaring errors either of content or of construction and diction—no garbling of facts."

This was the handsomest compliment Petey had received.

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“I may say further, young man, that while there is nothing in shape for your paper today, I have decided to give you an item of—of considerable moment,” continued Professor Bland. “No doubt you wish to know what it concerns. That, however, I am not at liberty to divulge at present, further than to state that it has to do with—er—a gift to the University, which, in accordance with custom and—er—tradition, may not be made public until it has been officially passed upon. I shall apprise you of the fact as soon as it becomes my privilege to make a full report. Where can you be reached, young man?”

“At *The Maroon* office,” said Petey. “And I thank you very much indeed.” He pulled out a visiting-card and handed it to the professor, who dropped it into his pocket. He walked out with a new light in his eye.

A few minutes later, Leeming, the athletic editor, gave an assignment to Silver. The order was to see Professor Bland. Chalmers had neglected to check the assignment before leaving the office.

Said Professor Bland, glancing away from his writing, and back again:

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“Dear me, I thought I made myself clear. I was under the impression that I promised to inform you as soon as the gift was officially accepted. Be assured, young man, that I shall do so.” He mechanically took the card Silver offered him and as mechanically stuffed it into his pocket with Petey’s. Silver was too excited to consider Professor Bland’s words. Besides, he understood that the professor was eccentric.

The hustlers reveled in anticipation that night when they heard how important their tips were.

“Petey, you’re the coming little literary light,” said Al Taylor. “A story from Bland! Fellows, Professor Bland has promised our Petey a scoop.”

The fellows laughed. Taylor explained more fully:

“It’s absolutely inhuman, the way you’re going to put that Fielding boy out of commission—flat on his back. Petey, Professor Bland is a regular pandemonium of loud sounds. And I don’t mind telling you that you’re a very lucky child. Shake, Strong, shake. You have Sylvester lashed to the mast.”

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Across the campus, Wally Miles was remarking to a tall, pug-nosed youth:

“If you don’t land the entire front page and spill over on the second, you’re a feather-weight, Silver, a bantam, and no mistake. What a whale of a yarn. I mean your yarn, not mine.”

Which impelled Silver to stick out his lower lip, disparagingly—“like papa,” the fellows described it.

Perhaps the boys may be pardoned for the thoughts that surged within them as they went to their eight-thirties next morning. For, as Professor Bland himself might have said, who indeed can hear, unmoved, the glorious, rustling wings of onrushing Victory? who contemplate with calm, cold eye the enemy’s swift rout?

Silver sat in *The Maroon* office after luncheon, swinging his legs and gazing out mournfully at the unfriendly elements. It was trying to snow and rain and blow a blizzard all at once. The telephone bell rang. Some one wanted Mr. Fielding.

“Mr. Fielding?” said the voice. “Ah! This is Mr. Bland. I am now permitted to release

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the item of which I told you yesterday. You may see me at my home if you so desire."

"Thank you, I'll come." Silver smiled and bowed to the transmitter. He turned to Chalmers.

"Chalmers, I've got a big story from Professor Bland," he exclaimed. "Better hold a column for me." That was the way Leeming would have said it.

Petey rushed in just as Silver, leering triumphantly, dashed out. Petey knew that leer and suspected it. Maybe he could do a thing or two himself! He went to the telephone and called Professor Bland's office. No one answered. He called Professor Bland's house.

"*Maroon?*" came the professor's voice. "I thought I requested you to see me at my home. Possibly the connection was poor. Yes, at once, if you find it convenient."

"I wonder if he means Silver," thought Petey. To Chalmers he said:

"I've got a whopper of a story, I think—Professor Bland," and ran out into the storm.

"Let them alone, Hal," said the news editor. "It's cruel, but you wanted to see."

Wet but cheerful, Petey and Silver hastened

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forth by converging routes that brought them into unexpected contact at a corner near the professor's house. The same thought flashed over both.

"Hello!" said Petey.

"Hello!" said Silver.

"Where you going?"

"I'm taking a walk."

"Where to?"

"No place. I'm a back-to-nature fiend."

They stopped before Professor Bland's door.

"Well!" said Petey.

"Well!"

"I want to speak to Professor Bland—alone."

"So do I." Silver's surprise was turning to wrath. "Say, what are you after, anyway, I'd like to know?"

"Don't try that now, Silver. It's too thin. You're after *my* story." Petey too was angry.

"What!" Silver was astonished at the cleverness of this bold trick.

Petey grew more indignant with the seconds. "I don't know how you worked it," he said; "but you're certainly pretty smooth—pret—*tee* smooth."

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“Don’t flatter me so,” returned Silver, darting deadly glances. “I take off my hat to you, Peter. You ’d make a professional crook look sick.”

“Fielding!”

“Strong!”

The sleety rain was chilling them through. They rang the bell. Professor Bland answered the door.

“It is rather disagreeable out, is it not?” he said in greeting.

“I am from *The Maroon*,” Petey answered intelligently.

“*The Maroon*,” echoed Silver.

“Ah!” The professor smiled. “Which is Mr. Fielding?”

Petey was astounded. “I think you promised me an interview,” he said. “My name is Strong.”

Silver “ahemmed” mockingly.

“I am,” said he, disregarding the interruption.

“Dear me, gentlemen,” purred Professor Bland. “It is of no consequence to me which one gets it. Will you be kind enough to wait in the library? I have not finished.”

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He hastily led the way to the library and placed two straight-backed chairs upon spongy-looking yellow rug.

“Kindly sit here, gentlemen,” he said. “It is very wet outside, is it not?”

He shuffled out of the room. In a moment the click of a typewriter reached the wrathful hustlers, condemned by reason of their superlatively moist condition to sit unpleasantly close their chairs almost touching, for any attempt to move about would be registered in tattling rivulets on the floor. Neither boy spoke. The long finger of the library clock moved slowly forward—made a complete revolution. The click-clack continued, insistent and interminable. The yellow rug was soaking through.

“Ah!”

The professor glided into the library, two large envelopes in one hand, two white visiting cards in the other.

“I find two cards in my desk,” he said. “Mr. Peter William Strong and Mr. Sylvester Henry Fielding.”

Petey and Silver glanced at each other in some embarrassment. They felt conflicting emotions.

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“Perhaps,” Professor Bland went on, “under the circumstances, I should present each with a copy. You will find the information quite complete.” He gave Petey one of the envelopes, handing the other to Silver. “This way, gentlemen. I hope I have not kept you waiting. Good day, gentlemen.”

Once more exposed to the weather, Petey and Silver halted, quaking, under the shelter of a bare-branched oak. Ordinarily they would have apologized. But this did not seem necessary.

“Well, Silver?” said Petey.

“Well, Peter?”

“We seem to be on the home stretch.”

“Home stretch it is.”

“Everything fair and square?”

“Fair and square it is.”

“What ’ll we do?”

“There’s one way——”

“What ’s that?”

“Race for it.”

“Race is good.”

“Ready?”

“Ready.”

Professor Bland’s house was more than a

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mile from the campus. All roads to the City Gray were hostile. The footing could not have been worse. The sidewalks were polished glass, the parkings, treacherous, rolling slides of ice, the streets mushy puddings of slush that had once been honest mud. The cold rain beat upon the ground, splashing impudently. Everything favored an eventful race.

It was a spectacle. Side by side ran Petey and Silver, ran and slipped and skidded and stumbled, bending sidewise and back at the call of muscle-straining wrenches, arms flopping wildly, first one and then the other spurting ahead and paying for it each time with periods of slower stumbling that brought him once more even with the enemy. Always side by side, sometimes in stride, no words but imprecations tossed back by the storm, on they tore.

At last the campus. Blowing like strange sea-animals, hats flopping against streaming faces, drenched coats winding round drenched trousers, they started the final sprint.

Silver was never sure how it happened. The only certainty was that it did happen. Pumping along between Ryerson and Kent,

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Silver's legs did a queer thing. They flew forward and upward very rapidly. Silver's body described a graceful arc, as a comet shooting earthward. Silver alighted with much force. His most vivid sensation was of his spine being driven into and through his skull. He continued to sit, one leg doubled foolishly under him.

Petey bent over the fallen athlete, asking if it hurt. Silver rolled his head in agonized negation, but allowed himself to be pulled to his feet. He could n't run. He could n't walk. He could only hop.

The finish was weird. Petey supported the cripple, an arm about his waist; Silver hopped bravely and painfully. And they forgot that the race was over. They hurried on. Now they were almost there. Silver hopped desperately. Only a rod more—only a yard—

Petey banged heavily into the door of *The Maroon* office, and pushed it open. He dragged his rival straight to the news editor's desk, pulled out Silver's envelope, then his own, and slapped them down on the news editor's blotting-pad. Silver sagged heavily, pulled loose, and dropped to the floor.

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Petey turned swiftly. And there, around the long table, as if petrified, sat the entire board of editors, staring at him in silent amazement. He sat down in Roberts swivel-chair and looked at the pools of water flowing from his clothes chasing each other across the room, meeting and parting in strange patterns; then down at the soggy bunch of wet overcoat which was Silver.

“The meeting stands adjourned,” said North, the managing editor.

Then came a confusion of sounds—exclamations, questions, laughter, girls’ voices.

Petey took off his hat. He sat there, panting and alone, while gentle hands cared for the wearied Silver. A great deal of talk and fuss was going on—all for Silver.

“Is he hurt?”

“Are you hurt, Fielding?”

“Just your knee?”

“That’s good.”

“Yes, lift him up.”

“On the table.”

“Easy now. Heave him.”

“All right now?”

“He’s a regular cloudburst.”

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“Strike up the band.”

Now the crowd surged around the swivel-chair.

“What ’s all this about, anyway?” Chalmers asked.

“The story,” gasped Petey.

“The sto—ory,” piped Silver, from his position in the rear.

“In the envelope,” Petey murmured.

“In the envelope,” shrilled Silver.

Chalmers ripped open one of the damp packets, extracted the bulky contents, glanced over the opening paragraphs. Petey watched. Robert’s face was expressionless as he handed the story to North. North’s mouth moved slightly. He passed the copy to Katherine Snowden.

“Read it,” he said. “The board ought to hear it. It ’s the only one of its kind.”

Miss Snowden began to read from the closely written pages. It was like this:

“ ‘Professor Bland, in an interview with a representative of this journal recently made public the gift to the University of a unique and valuable collection of monographs on the fossils of’—why, I know about fossils—‘Op-

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hiderpeton, Dolichosoma, Molgophis, Ptyonius—
—I can do it even faster—‘Hylonomidae, Tudi-
tanidae, Stegocephala’—lucky I took that
course—page eight—‘its vertebrae are phyl-
lospondylous’—poor thing!—and this one had
‘a jugal canal on the supratemporal’—no
wonder it ossified—here’s a picture of a starv-
ing tadpole—how it reminds me of the Dicerato-
saurus robustus—page thirteen—listen, Mar-
gery—‘the squamosal of——’ ”

Miss Snowden stopped, exhausted. “Shall
I continue?” she asked. “There are fifteen
more pages.”

“No, thanks,” said Chalmers. “We can guess
the rest. It will do for a note next week. One
of the new reporters can fix it up.”

One of the new reporters! Petey’s heart
sank. He stole a glance at Silver, who had
hopped into the foreground. Silver looked sad.
It may have been the knee.

“This is the worst I ever saw,” said the
news editor, severely. “Which of you owns
this thing?”

The story went unclaimed. The envelopes
could not be identified.

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“We ’ll have a look at those strings now,” said Chalmers. “Produce ’em.”

He stretched the dirty, wet strings side by side on the desk, then crumpled them into small wads and flicked them away.

“Exactly even,” he announced. “Dead heat. Broke the tape the same identical fraction.”

Silver wondered whether it would be Mud Horse or Devilish Dubb. Petey fumbled with his cap, and arose.

“Well, Chalmers,” he said, “I sort of thought I had landed something this time. I ’m sorry. So long.”

“Don’t hurry,” said Chalmers, cordially. “Stick around. I want you to carry an editorial down to the press for me. You can take your last squint at the office, too.”

The news editor picked up a sheet of paper, referred to the secretary’s minutes, and wrote for a minute while the board chattered. He gave the copy to Petey.

“You may look at it if you wish, Strong,” he said.

Petey turned misty eyes upon the page. The editorial began:

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“*The Maroon* takes pleasure in informing its readers that the following have been elected to the reportorial positions—”

After that came some names. The first two were startlingly familiar. Petey read them over and over, to make sure. Then he reached out an arm and pulled Silver into his lap, flapping the paper before his eyes.

While they were recovering, Chalmers made a speech.

“Step up, folks,” he said. “Step up and look. It’s twins.”

One of the associate editors whooped.

The newest reporters grinned sheepishly.

“How’s your knee, Silver?” inquired Petey.

HONORS IN DIPLOMACY

I

MANY seniors keep up a splendid interest in their studies during the Spring Quarter, even to cutting dances and meetings of the printing committee. And these are the wise. Foolish indeed are those who sit in the back row and match pennies; but occasionally they reform, for reasons more or less urgent. Bob Forrest, now, cultivated printed books and messy notes in the last days because he had wagered twenty dollars on his chances of getting a diploma. He said he would buy something useful with his winnings—a pipe-rack, maybe, or a new collar for the Zeta dog.

Curtis, who lived across the hall in Hitchcock, delivered the Recorder's note as Forrest and Norry Norton were talking senior politics in Bob's room. Forrest thought it looked like a chapel deficiency, but it was worse than that. It informed him, in the subtly ironical, heart-chilling phraseology known only to the faculty, that special examinations would be re-

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quired in two of his courses. Whereupon Norton fixed the bet at even money, and Curtis left awkwardly, observing in a matter-of-fact tone that it was hard luck and that he was "in the same hole." Forrest suggested pitch, smiling coolly at Norry's unsympathetic comments, and silently cursing minutely and vigorously each syllable of the Recorder's communication.

When a chronic loafer is held for senior "exams," there 's not much hope for him. Norton dwelt on this point with glee, and revealed his plans for spending the twenty. He would give a feed, he said, and Forrest himself, in half-mourning, should be toast-master. He was undecided whether to order course by course or leave the whole thing to the head-waiter.

For Norry was convinced that his money was safe. It was well known that Forrest had reached his final year with less learning than any other senior since colleges began; and that his last Quarter had been his masterpiece of scholastic vagrancy. As the University of Chicago does not exist for such as he, no future senior can possibly be so worthless—a cheering or depressing thought, according to the point of view.

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Of course, Forrest did the unexpected. Even Norry would not have supposed that he would slip from his room, interview two professors, and heed their words. The professors, who were preparing for vacations abroad, were inclined to be facetious. One of them said he was delighted to meet Mr. Forrest, a pleasure that had been denied him in the classroom. The other, leering horribly, said he often feared that young men lacked imagination. They agreed, with unconcealed satisfaction, that the specials would be rather difficult.

And while he was digesting this news and a late luncheon, he called on Curtis, whom he hardly knew. They considered the situation with great frankness, though Forrest felt that he was probably making a pathetic fool of himself.

“The trouble with me is, I have n’t any backbone,” Bob said, as he lounged, in truly invertebrate fashion, in Curtis’s largest chair. “All I want is moral support—I don’t like tutors. It’s mighty lucky we’re down in the same courses, because I specially want that diploma. If I fail to pry that twenty out of Norry Norton, I’ll consider my education a terrific fizzle.”

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“I don’t suppose you ’re doing it just for the bet, are you?” asked Curtis. “You must have other reasons.”

“I may have, but I can’t stop to think them up now, because I’ve got to go to a dinner-dance in the country, and I have to dress,” and Forrest ran a disapproving eye over his faultlessly clothed person. “But really, Curtis, I did not expect to be stuck for the finals.”

“I knew I was down,” said Curtis. “You can’t be a captain of industry and the big squeeze in the Phi Beta Kappa at one and the same time. You know how it goes to work your way.”

“Yes, I know,” sympathized Bob, who had not the slightest notion, except that a good many fellows were said to earn their education by doing some sort of stunts. He supposed they had to go slow on cabs and things until pay-day. As one of his friends put it, Forrest had thoughtlessly allowed himself to be the only son of wealthy and loving parents, and had tried to make amends by insisting on a thick skull, which kept him from realizing his opportunities.

HONORS IN DIPLOMACY

“Well, it ’s Monday now, and the ‘exams’ come on Friday,” Curtis figured briskly. “They ’ll be three hours long. The Poly Con is five pounds of small print and the Sociology is the same, if not more so.”

“That ’s easy,” said Bob, encouragingly. “No trouble at all. I ’d start this afternoon if it were n’t for the party this evening. Tomorrow I have some golf finals that can’t be passed up. I ’ll appear at seven tomorrow night for the getaway. See you then.”

He felt quite pleased with the arrangement as he dressed for the dinner-dance, but he soon forgot it because there was nobody about to discuss it with. His room was usually occupied by a small crowd of his friends, who explained that they liked to use his excellent tobacco and scarf-pins. If he happened to be dressing, they made remarks about golden-haired matinee idols and clothing advertisements and esthetics. They said it was a shame he was not Head Marshal, he was so decorative; and he looked so well in a track suit that they urged him to make another try for the team. Forrest preferred the costumes worn in golf and polo.

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The dance was perfect, but for the mosquitoes. The girls had a cotillion, and Forrest and Norton, who stopped at Hitchcock on his way to the Rho house, had great fun tearing painted silk favors into queer shapes. Later, they finished their pitch series and talked through smoke.

“Isabelle Blythe was much interested in your degree,” volunteered Norry, raking in his game.

“You might leave me out of your talk.”

“We did,” smiled Norry. “We hardly mentioned you all evening.”

“Don’t say *we*, Norry. You’re too previous. It strikes me that Miss Blythe is rather fond of *me*.”

“Exactly. For I noticed that she invited *me* to the dance, and I heard her refuse to let you fill up her entire program. Let’s not argue about it, because it’s a clear case of freeze-out for you, Bobby.”

Bob shrugged his shoulders, and allowed Norry to trump a ten-spot.

“She talked a good deal about brother Tommy,” Norry resumed. “She thinks Tommy is O. K. Remember what a little sport he used to be?”

HONORS IN DIPLOMACY

Forrest wasted an unfavorable adjective on Tommy Blythe. "I wonder if he's still cutting up," he said. "You know I'm responsible for him—promised his father. Lord, the things I told that infant's trusting parent. It makes me blush. I guaranteed to subdue him, protect him, nurse him and send him forth a perfect specimen, morally, physically, spiritually and a few other ways. I have n't seen the little wretch in two months, excepting at a meal or so. Must look him up."

"Your affection for Tommy is indeed touching," said Norry.

"I want him to pass his studies—that's what freshmen are for. And I promised his father."

"I understand you are greatly stuck on his father."

"Well, I think I stand in with Tommy's family as well as some others."

Norry smiled the smile of the very wise.

Bob inquired, "Did she say anything about his studies?"

"Maybe she did, but I heard so much airy persiflage that I'm not sure. Most of the senior fellows were having nightmares out on the

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lawn over finding jobs—regular funeral. About everybody was there.”

“Curtis was n’t there.”

“Curtis?”

“The fellow across the hall. I just heard him come in and slam his door. I suppose he’s been out somewhere, working.”

“Speaking of work,” said Norry, “I’ll bet he’s as sore as a goat about getting caught on the specials. Those grave-digger fellows generally are.”

“No, I think you are wrong,” Bob ventured. “You can’t be a captain of industry and the leading deacon of the Phi Beta Kappa at one and the same time. Use your head.”

“You don’t even know him, Bob, so cork up. Now you’re not sore, of course. You’re just amused. You know you always made fun of diplomas and grinds.”

“Wrong again. I simply said I could not see the light that lies in a professor’s eyes. Also, that a degree was merely a question of being on the job. For instance, if you had been tending to business, you’d have caught my jack with that ace you’re holding back. You are a rotten fortune teller, Norry. Never shall

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it be said that I objected to being stuffed with knowledge.”

“Not if you saw plenty of oysters in the stuffing.”

“Don’t mix figures,” Bob retorted. “I ’m no dead turkey, and if I were, I ’d be blind. If you think my credits were all pearl-bearing, I ’ll let you take a peek at my course-book.”

He rummaged numerous drawers and boxes, finally discovering the course-book in a pile of discarded magazines. Sprawled on the floor, he regarded the contents with puzzled frowns, while Norry, who lay on the cot, awaited his comment.

“This one,” he began, punctuating each entry with a dig of his paper-knife, “was about how you ought to live in a community apartment and buy cream-puffs and canned beans at a community kitchen so that the cook would have time to study the contemporary French composers. Clever scheme, only you ’d have to live in a flat, which is impossible. Here ’s English — Beowulf, Ecgtheow’s bairn — reminded me of an intoxicated buzz-saw. I remember the ‘prof’ asked Ted Larned who was the greatest American poet, and he said: ‘Why, I don’t

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know. I've never had this course before.' He almost got canned for it. I took this German 3 to make up for deficient Physics in prep school. Hello, here's old Debater Socrates Republic—or is it Plato's?"

"It's immaterial," murmured Norry. "Don't stop to split hairs."

"Ethics, now, was the best course I ever had. Stella Andrews and I used to play foolish-puzzle all hour. Poly Con 1—that was the difference between an entrepreneur and something else—probably a farmer. I dropped out of this one because the 'prof' said we couldn't bluff him on references and quotation marks. He was a humorist, as it turned out. He asked me the first day where the Aleutian Islands were. I thought he said highlands, and bet on Scotland. I lost."

"Why don't you get up some light lessons for flat flunkers?" suggested Norton. "Your method would be original."

"That reminds me of the course Grace Campbell took," laughed Forrest. "The girls had to go on a fake shopping tour, and Grace ordered seven double sirloins for a family of six, so that there would be one extra for the baby—she said

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babies were always so hungry. Here were some good ones last year. I could always count on two solid hours of sleep after a busy night. Which brings me to my present difficulties. My eight-thirty is the price of buttons in New Zealand, and the two o'clock is mostly defective children. I hate defective children. If I ever catch one of 'em——”

“Let me take twenty dollars, Bob,” exclaimed Norry.

“Really need it, or do you want to squander it on airships and peanuts?”

“I need it—have n't tasted real food for a week—but I 'm too proud to beg. I mean the twenty you were foolish enough to bet me. After listening to your recent discourse, I think we might as well cash in right now.”

“You 're making the mistake of your young life.” Forrest tossed aside the course-book and stood against the wall, hands deep in pockets. “Norry, I believe you honestly think I 'm an infernal blooming idiot,” he said.

“Let 's not go into that,” smiled Norton. “You would be sure to get angry. But don't you care. You 'll be more of a social lion than

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ever. It's getting to be quite the thing—to be dropped."

"Dropped!"

That was all Forrest said. He began peeling off his clothes, whistling softly.

Much wisdom moved Norton to silence. He arose, cleared the table by the window—there were some girls' photographs, one of Miss Isabelle Blythe—and constructed upon it, of books and bric-a-brac, a tottering shrine, on the top of which he propped two uncut volumes, flanked by a paper-knife and a huge pair of field glasses.

Forrest's "good night" was civil.

Norry glanced back at Hitchcock as he struck across the campus. A green-shaded lamp glowed in Curtis's room. Behind the swaying net curtains of Forrest's windows a livelier scene was depicted: A partially disrobed youth, outlined in statuesque defiance; suddenly a flying shower of books and papers; a head thrust out for an instant; then the swift descent of the blinds.

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II

Curtis had dissatisfied black hair and earnest cheek-bones and a forehead that looked as if it could turn out A's in every course. Perhaps it could, given the time, for, unlike Forrest, Curtis had done a few things thoroughly. He knew as much about business as Bob knew about polo ponies. They seemed certain to learn from each other.

Forrest decided at once that he must assume the leadership—that was one of his habits. After he had won his Tuesday golf match—that was another habit, winning things—he persuaded himself that the cramming would be more successful if prepared for in an artistic manner. As he was passing a theater when he reached this conclusion, he promptly bought box seats for "Silly Milly" and telephoned Curtis, who came protestingly, on Bob's promise to begin work after the show. The entertainment proved so saddening that Forrest felt obliged to buy a highly-illuminated supper, which included jack-snipe and an enormous rabbit. He then ordered a package of sand-

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wiches, and called a cab, not only because the sandwiches made it necessary, but that the ride to the campus might induce the correct state of mind for the midnight study period.

As sometimes happens, these two seniors began to wonder why they had held such queer opinions of each other. Forrest displayed great interest in Curtis's work, and asked him what position he was filling. He had an immense admiration for people who could "hold down jobs."

"I have not bought out any one concern," said Curtis. "This quarter, I am a public typewriter, a solicitor of advertisements and a contributor to a lumber journal—I used to split kindling when I was a child."

"Then you 're a self-made man," cried Bob. "I've heard it was a very fine thing. You ought to be all puffed up about it."

"It's nothing to crow over in my case," said Curtis. "That's mostly what got me hung up in my studies."

Forrest dismissed the argument with a wave of his glove.

"Blow anyhow. Now there was my great grandfather. He made himself. Father springs

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him on me every Sunday afternoon at two o'clock when I'm home. Great-grandfather used to walk sixty-three miles to school every morning and back again for luncheon and dinner. It was bitter cold the year round, and he had only a few shoes and scarcely any fur overcoats—father's especially proud of that. I tell him he probably had a brougham waiting behind the barn. The old boy kept a diary, too—sounds like Caesar overcoming the Helvetians at one fell slap. He died in his prime, great-grandfather did.

“But you needn't feel too chesty,” he cautioned Curtis, after advising the cabby not to overheat his “thoroughbred.” “You can't be anything big nowadays unless you've been a poor little newsboy or a starving bootblack on Christmas Eve. Think of it! Here we are, being ruined in college, when we might be improving our time. We might even be chimney-sweeps. I consider that one of the greatest questions now confronting the American people.”

Curtis attempted, without success, to introduce the subject of Political Economy. Forrest was too much concerned with the problems of the nation. While Curtis was preparing his

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room for the cramming, his guest fell sound asleep in his chair, an unopened book in his lap. He had tried to be decent.

Curtis slipped a note under Forrest's door in the morning, calling attention to a conference at the Reynolds Club. Bob overslept, and reached the Club in time to lunch at the Commons, where he met some friends. He left word that he had been kidnaped and carried to an honor society banquet. By midnight, when Curtis had finished his review, he had not returned.

Next morning he explained:

"I'm mighty sorry. Lost my books, too. I had all the fellows looking for them, but we couldn't find them. That's funny, because one was a red book and the other was green. I dropped a whole day, didn't I?"

"I'm going to give you an old list of examination questions to see if you know anything whatever about Poly Con," Curtis announced. "Take this and go somewhere and get busy."

The answers were ready at noon. Most of them were meaningless; the rest were amusing.

"Don't judge me too harshly," said Forrest.

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“I went to the Club and was just beginning to get some sense out of my notes when one of those college quartets came in and sang ‘Sweet Evening Star.’ Did you ever hear ‘Sweet Evening Star’ as a quartet? I threw chairs at them, but they kept right on and when they started the ‘Hand-organ Sextet,’ I had to run for Cobb. But that was worse, on account of one of those poor, howling unfortunates who study Public Speaking aloud. Awfully sad case—perfectly hopeless. And one of the questions was about defective children. I believe they just do it to arouse sympathy. I’d like to ——”

“The trouble with you,” said Curtis, angrily, “is that your parents like you too much. You’re not going to be handed your diploma on a silver tray. If you care for my candid opinion, I’ll say this much. I think, after the chance you had—and after the big talk you put up—that it will be a dirty disgrace if you get kicked out of the class.”

Forrest selected a topaz pin. “You ought to go on the stage, Curtis,” he said. “I believe you have temperament.” And he swung out of the room.

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Curtis called Norton in consultation.

“I don’t know much about this bet you have with Forrest, but I think you’ve won it, Norton,” he said. “He seems to have passed it up. I thought I should tell you about the arrangement we made, because you know him so well. I don’t see why he ever came to me in the first place.”

“That,” said Norry, “is one of the things that we can never know. And as far as that bet is concerned, I don’t want to win—never did. You may think it was a queer thing to do, but I put up that twenty for the sole and only purpose of trying to get him to work. I thought he would go after the degree just to fool me. He does things like that. I wonder that you took the trouble to help him.”

“I want to finish the job, now I’ve started it,” Curtis returned simply. “He is making a miserable farce of it, but I’m still hoping. The explanation is—I like him, Norton.”

“Yes, that’s what they all say. People like him, so they smooth away all the rough places. Somebody will insist upon expiring in his place when his time comes to croak.”

“Probably you’re right. He has lots of

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friends. There was a fellow up here only ten minutes ago looking for him—by the way, he asked for you, too. He said his name was Blythe.”

“Tommy Blythe!” exclaimed Norry. “Don’t laugh, but Bob Forrest is that young person’s confidential adviser. He’d do anything for him. I believe he’d even study for him.”

Norry jumped up suddenly. “I—I’ve got an idea,” he cried.

“Did it bite you?”

“We’ll make a tutor of Bob. He must save Tommy Blythe from the wrath of the ‘profs’.”

“Do you call that an idea? It sounds more like a brain-gurgle.”

“Listen, Curtis, and hold me if I get dangerous. We have now discovered that moral suasion, refined cruelty and kindness are powerless. We must therefore finesse. I’m a head professor of finessing. Bob Forrest thinks he’s the only salvation of that freshman. He’s having remorse right now. We must make him think that the Grand Order of Flunkers is about to be conferred upon Tommy. We’ll give him the proper books, and he’ll study an arm off—

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for Tommy. Only, he might recognize the books."

"He will not. He does n't even know their titles. But Tommy might put him wise."

"We 'll bind and gag Tommy, if necessary," and Norry looked as though he would enjoy the operation. "I 'll do picket duty."

"It may work," Curtis admitted; "and again, it may not. He has all night before him—the 'exams' come tomorrow. You give him these books—he thinks he lost them last night. They tell the whole thing, and if he just reads them, he is bound to get through the 'exams.' He has the head, if he applies himself. Now let 's adjourn to his room and wait for him."

"I have a little the advantage of him on a certain proposition that may help some," confessed Norry. "I 'm in dead right myself, and I can use it to stir up his blood—he thinks he has a chance."

Norry grinned broadly and passed a hand over one of his coat pockets. The pocket contained a small photograph of Miss Isabelle Blythe. He explained:

"Oh, it 's just a personal matter. You might

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call it a—a *rivalry*. But here he comes now, as the actorino said."

The scheme worked smoothly. Norry was not even forced to lie as much as he had expected.

"That blamed freshman is going to flunk—I know he is," growled Forrest. "I've been waiting for it. That's why he was looking for me. I'm going to tutor him."

"But you need the time for your own studies," objected Norton.

"It's suicidal," Curtis groaned.

"Hang my own studies." Forrest was pacing the floor. "Hang Tommy, too. He has n't any sense of responsibility. I'll call him up now."

"Oh, no, don't do that!" Curtis said hastily. "I will——"

"I was just starting for the Zeta house to see a fellow over there," Norry broke in. "I'll get Tommy and bring him here."

Bob still walked the floor. Norry returned with two books. Tommy was out, but had left his books, said the scout.

"Give *me* the books," thundered Forrest, with an inflection that would have put Lady

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Macbeth and the daggers to shame, as Curtis said afterward. "The little shrimp has n' even cut the pages."

Norry winked. He was about to play his trump card. He said:

"I—er—I saw Isabelle Blythe. She hopes Tommy will pass his courses. She hopes you will, too."

"She does?" muttered Bob. Then, "You two get out of here." He ushered his friends to the door and closed it upon their eloquent backs.

"Curtis," yawned Norton, as he tumbled into the big chair, "it's developing beautifully. Tommy was really looking for me when he came up here—one of the Zeta fellows told me while I was supposed to be going after the books. Tommy's sister is giving a dinner tomorrow for some of the graduating class and Tommy's on my trail with an invitation. I'm glad I'm going to graduate, because nobody else qualifies. Wonder how old Bob would feel if he knew."

The letter-slot in Forrest's door did valiant service that evening. Curtis and Norton took turns squinting. Three minutes after the start,

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Forrest was seen to throw both books violently into the far corner. There was a period of suspense while he strolled about the room. He stopped once to examine some photographs. Then he recovered the books and began to snip the pages industriously. Frequent views showed him wading slowly through the green book and a box of stale-looking sandwiches, his position ranging from bolt upright in his chair to prone on the floor, half smothered in cushions. When Norton left at midnight, he reported that the patient was perspiring freely, breathing heavily, and just beginning the red book and a bag of apples. At two o'clock he was smoking a pipe and writing feverishly, a towel around his head. When Curtis rose at seven, Bob was reviewing both books and using profane language.

Curtis breakfasted alone. He next saw Forrest in the examination room, scribbling steadily and laboriously. It was the same at the afternoon special. Curtis hurried to the Gym. for a plunge when he had correctly answered the last question. He found Norry practising fancy diving. Forrest came soon. They finished the swim without talking, dressed, and

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strolled to the "C" Bench. It seemed the most appropriate place to go.

Forrest broke the silence.

"Well, I did it. I passed both 'exams.' I asked the 'profs.' Yes, that's straight, fellows."

Norton pulled a twenty-dollar gold piece from his pocket and handed it to the winner. "I guess you earned it," he said briefly.

"Thanks," laughed Forrest, flipping the coin in his hand; "I'd completely forgotten the bet. And before you ask me, I'll say that I saw through your little scheme, and I greatly admire your nerve. I saw it in two minutes."

"That must have been when you threw the books," said Norry, brightening.

"Then why on earth did you keep on studying?" demanded Curtis.

"Ask Norry. If he thinks hard, he may guess why I did it."

But Norry was gazing down the walk toward the Women's Halls. Forrest also looked. It was Isabelle Blythe; and stubby little Tommy Blythe was with her, attempting to be dignified while holding a white parasol over his

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sister's big white hat. Norton and Forrest went to meet them in front of Haskell.

"How did the specials come out, Mr. Forrest?" eagerly inquired Miss Blythe.

"Fine. Killed 'em both."

"I'm so glad," smiled Miss Blythe. "I was dreadfully anxious about it."

"I knew you were," and Forrest gave Norry an enlightening glance. "So I—I mean, I studied quite hard."

"Yes, he studied quite some hard," put in Norry.

"I think it's just lovely," said Miss Blythe. "Now you," addressing the hopeful Norry, "were certain to get your degree, and so was I. But you," and she smiled radiantly upon Forrest—"you are a hero. You did something really interesting."

Norry wondered then why he had never before felt such an aversion for Forrest's handsome features. Bob's smile reminded him of a hyena. And he bided his time.

"Everybody's getting to be so terribly wise," said Miss Blythe. "Even Tommy got all B's last quarter. He's going out for honors."

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“I knew,” lied Forrest, “that he was very brilliant.”

“Aw, say,” remonstrated Tommy, cutting circles on the sidewalk with the toe of an elaborately buckled shoe.

“I hear you stopped at my room, Tommy,” Bob hinted.

“Yes.” Tommy hesitated and looked at his sister. “Isabelle’s giving one of those new-thought dinners tonight. The game is, to guess what you ’re eating. That is, if you do manage to eat—I can’t. I was going to ask——”

“Tommy refused to attend, and was looking for a substitute,” interrupted Miss Blythe. And Norry’s confident grin froze on his face when she added:

“I think you deserve the reward, Mr. Forrest. You ’ve worked so hard for your degree. The dinner ’s to be very informal, so you may come right along with me.”

Without further ceremony, Tommy surrendered the parasol to Forrest and made off across the campus as if fearing more changes in his sister’s queer dinner plans.

“Good-by, Norry,” sang Bob. “Good-by, Curtis. Keep cheerful, Norry.”

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They walked on, Bob Forrest and Isabelle Blythe.

Norry went slowly back to the "C" Bench, and sat down beside Curtis.

"Curtis," he said, "I'm getting altogether too generous. I need a long, long rest, or a sea voyage or something."

"I begin to see why he studied all night," observed Curtis, ponderously. "He's interested in Tommy Blythe's relatives. It looks like a family affair."

"So does my twenty," sighed Norry, gazing after the white parasol, just disappearing behind the trees. "I had hoped that he'd spend it on a steak. But he won't. He'll buy roses—pink ones. She's very fond of them—big pink roses—with long stems."

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